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PHOTON



CURSE OF THE
DEMON!



"The crop was springing up, men bristling with arms who came rushing to attack him."

PHOTON

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DEDICATION

This issue is dedicated to the late **RÖD SERLING**, a man who brought the unusual and the imaginative into our homes for a good many years.

FEATURES

MARVELOUS MÉLIÈS

Paul Hammond gives us a preview of his new book about one of fantasy film's most famous pioneers.



PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE

Bill Warren takes a look at a new type of horror movie. The stars of the picture offer their opinions in a special panel discussion.



ONE SHOT ONE SHEETS

A loving but uncompromising satire of fantasy film posters by Mark McGee, Cynthia Roberts and Dave Ludwig.



THREE FOR THE SHOW

Mark and Susan McGee chat with filmmakers Jack Arnold, Roger Corman and Herman Cohen about their adventures in fifties fantasyland.



CURSE OF THE DEMON

A detailed examination of Jacques Tourneur's supernatural masterpiece by Ronald V. Borst and Scott MacQueen.



MARIO BAVA: THE ILLUSION OF REALITY

Alain J. Silver and James Ursini delve into the dark and mysterious world of the Italian director, emphasizing his ability to bring the supernatural to life on screen.



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COVER

The familiar face of the fire demon from **CURSE OF THE DEMON** as rendered by Bill Nelson.

INSIDE FRONT COVER

Through Dave Ludwig's ink rendering, Jason is on the defensive once more in this scene everyone knows from **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS**.

BACK COVER

Dave Ludwig's scratchboard memorial to Boris Karloff depicting his appearance in Mario Bava's **BLACK SABBATH**.

PHOTON PHOTO

A scene from Jack Arnold's masterwork, **THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN**.



is good while, but we finally made it.

There is a time, during the very early stages of production of an issue of PHOTOW, when it looks as though the magazine will never be completed. There seems so much to organize, so many separate facets which must be blended together to form the finished product. Yet, somehow, it always seems to get done, although far too often it gets done a lot slower than we would wish. After quite a long delay, we are happy to present our 29th issue. Our thanks go, not only to all of those who were involved with the publication of this issue, but also to our readers who waited patiently for its completion.

Heading the list of features this time around is an analysis of Tourneur's masterpieces, CURSE OF THE DEMON by Russell V. Short and Scott MacQueen. Although the film was made close to twenty years ago and has been covered in one way or another in a variety of genre magazines, it seems particularly appropriate to take a second look at this classic in light of the interest in the occult generated by the recent release of THE EXORCIST. Witchcraft, devil worship and demonology are hardly new or original plot ideas. M&M's toyed with such notions as far back as 1896 in LE MAUVOIS OUE DIABLE. The theme has also been used successfully in films like HAZARD (1921), BURN, WITCH, BURN (1962), THE DEVILS BRIDE (1967) and HOGWARTY'S BANE (1968). Despite the quality of these pictures, THE EXORCIST seems to have become (perhaps unfortunately) the standard by which films about devils and demons (if not all horror films) must be measured. CURSE OF THE DEMON, far from quite as well in the comparison, and remains one of the most frightening exercises in the supernatural ever filmed. Short and MacQueen delve lovingly into the subtle but powerful atmosphere of terror created by Tourneur's atmosphere which is, in part, illustrated by the use of a terrible demon. They also explore scenes which were deleted from the release prints of the picture and which shed additional light on the characterizations of Haiden, Karswell and Mrs. Karswell.

Also featured in this issue is an article on Italian horror film director Mario Bava by Alain Siller and James Unico. Intended to be not so much a career survey as an appreciation of Bava's own particular directorial style, the piece dwells on the imagery and atmosphere which mark Bava's (and in part, the Italian) style.

Born in 1914, Bava followed in the footsteps of his father and became a cameraman and second unit director for the Italian cinema. A complete list of the films which he has photographed can be found in Film Page 83. In 1960 he made his directorial debut with LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO (BLACK SUNDAY), which he still believes to be his best work. Bava often acts as director of photography on his own films and, at the same time, works on scripts, and does other special effects and does much of the editing. Like many Italian directors, he has occasionally assumed an English pseudonym such as John Foss, John Hild and John M. Oak.

Our Italian correspondent, Luigi Cozzi, was able to visit Bava shortly before the completion of this issue. His report makes the unfortunate observation that the years have not been kind to the aging director. Bava has been replaced by Dario Argento as Italy's king of terror, with the former's films considered old-fashioned and dated. He confesses to having made most of his films out of dire financial need, despite the fact that he recognized them to be poorly written with ridiculous stories.

"I've shot some incredibly stupid movies," he says, "and I wouldn't let them and didn't have the time to re-write them. One of my big faults is that I try too hard to please the producer and then, in the end, they turn against me."

Bava refused several anecdotes about producers it has been his misfortune to work with. He also revealed some of the incidents which occurred during the making of his pictures.

"I directed most of CALTICI, THE IMMORTAL MONSTER," Bava told Cozzi. "Riccardo Frede signed it Robert Langton, but he left soon after the production had begun. It was a take-off on GIULIEMASSI and the

EMANATIONS

Mark Frank

slime monster was just a ton of cow's entrails with a man (poor man!) hidden inside to make it move. It was summertime, so the big problem was to keep this away from it! During the filming of PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES, Italian American screenwriter was rewriting the entire script right on the set! He would hand me his revisions just before the scene and I had to shoot it. Incidentally, I used all that fog because it was in the script, but because it was supposed to be an alien world and they simply didn't have enough money to set up the

proper scenery, I used the fog to do the fact that there wasn't any alien world at all... just an empty interior!"

Bava's LISA AND THE DEVIL, starring Elke Sommer and Telly Savalas, has yet to be released. He has also completed THE HOUSE AT NUMBER 8, a ghost story. "I enjoy making terror movies," he admits, "although I, myself, forget very easily. I can't stand being alone in the dark, I need lights and company. I don't believe in monsters and witches, but when it's dark and the streets are empty... well, I'd prefer looking myself up at home!"

Apparently, the commercial failure of his past few films have made Bava unpopular with Italian producers. This is one of the reasons why he spent most of the last two years as a second unit director on television's MOSES, THE LAWGIVER starring Burt Lancaster and directed by Geoffrey De Bozio. Bava also created all the special effects, including the parting of the Red Sea. Fans of BLACK SUNDAY and BLACK SABBATH continue to hope that Bava will one again deliver the kind of eerie thriller he built his reputation on.

Luigi Cozzi also reported that the First International Science Fiction Film Festival sponsored by Italy's leading SF publishing house, Libria Editrice and the Italian State Movie Department, was an overwhelming success. Held in Rome this past year, the Festival lasted 12 days and showed 43 movies to hundreds of thousands of eager fans. Films such as TARANTULA and THIS ISLAND EARTH played to record breaking crowds, as these had never been shown in Italy before. For TARANTULA, the police had to be called in to prevent these without tickets from trying to force their way into the sold-out performance. In Italy, films are withdrawn from circulation five years after their release and cannot, by law, be shown again. Luigi is asking American fans to help him track down prints of certain films, such as SPACE CHILDREN, for the next Festival. Interested fans can write to Luigi, care of this magazine, just place your letter to him in a stamped envelope and send it along.

Bill Warren's review of PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE was written before the box office returns were in, returns which resulted in a devastating review loss for 20th Century-Fox. Still, his prediction of PHANTOM becoming a cult picture is already being true. New York's Egan Theatre plays the film every Wednesday and Thursday at midnight to a considerable audience. Plans are apparently being made for a selective re-release of the DePina film with a re-wrapped publicity campaign more suitable to its content. Special thanks go back to Warren and William Feiler for their work on the backset of the Phantodex Parv, a gentleman of the movie's stars at a meeting of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society.

Mark and Susan McGee once again provide three entertaining chats with important figures in the world of imaginative movies. This time, they interview Jack Arnold, Roger Corman and Herman Lubliner, directors and a producer who have concentrated their efforts within the genre although by no means exclusively. Both Arnold and Corman have had to struggle with silly scripts, short shooting schedules and patry budgets, often rising cordially above their material. Arnold is identified with work of such varied quality as THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN and GULLIGAN'S ISLAND, and is currently preparing to bring yet another science fiction property to the screen. Corman, now the master of low-budgets so it, speaks warmly about his early AMP years and the problems which he confronted at the beginning of his career. Finally, Herman Lubliner reveals a good deal about himself, his personality and his attitude about his films in an extensive interview with a surprise ending.

Two issues ago (EPA), we published a number of "Capsule Reviews" which were intended to satirize the sort of pompous, unwhimsical short notices that have dotted the pages of film magazines for decades. Surprisingly, despite our warning of the fact that these reviews should not be taken seriously, quite a number of readers became outraged at what they thought were the actual opinions of the authors. Gordon Hansen and Phil-Edwin Strong III. A few more words to require us to where (Continued on page 8)

PHOTON PHOLK

THE RON BORST STORY

"I love horror movies!"

—Ron Borst, after a TV showing of UNKNOWN ISLAND.

Ronald V. Borst . . . an odd name. Odder, still, is the strange and peculiar man behind the name—who, at a mere 27 years of age, has devoted more than half his life to the promotion of fantastic films. Some say he did it out of boredom, frustration and lack of friends. Those few who know him will realize that this is only partially true.

Ron became a convert to the world of imagination in 1968, during a myriatic showing of *HORROR OF DRACULA*. Mrs. Gertrude Schuck, a former matron at Sorority, Pennsylvania's Herald Theatre, recalls that fearful afternoon. "It was a beastly picture," she relates, "and I had quite a time controlling the kids' rants. Only little Roney was quiet . . . strangely quiet, now that I recall."

Stranger still was how Ron's interest in the genre continued to manifest itself. While most youngsters based themselves with stamp and coin collecting, Ron's free time was spent prying the latest softy posters from displays in the local bazaar—a hobby that made him a regular at Sorority's famed juvenile hall. Judge Raymond S. Gaspert, a county probation officer at the time, refuses to speak of those early years, but says (off the record) that he still remembers little "Roney the Raven."

Then, in 1963, fate bestowed Ron's life around once again—he discovered the world of film fanzines. Eager to air his views and opinions, he immediately began typing his first film review. More than a year later, Ron had yet to notice that his second-hand, 1946 Royal did not have a ribbon. It took fledgling editor Mark Frank to set everything straight. Under the guidance of this self-proclaimed "brilliant" fanzine publisher, Ron was soon on his way to becoming SFilm fanzine's most prolific author.

Today, after more than a decade of publishing as an author and horror film historian, Ron's work can be found gracing the pages of important magazines like *The Monster Times* and *Planet of the Apes*. He hopes to have

something published in *Guinness's Monster Magazine* sometime in the future. Is it no wonder that Ron prefers to live a secluded life in the wilds of Pennsylvania—away from all his fans?



ABOVE: Ron Borst shells out for an issue of PHOTON.

BILL NELSON, asked about his life, replied: "When you're only 27 years old, there isn't that much to tell."

Bill is an illustrator who has been working professionally for 10 years. He graduated from Richmond Professional Institute with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree. He's married with no children and drives a green Fiat.

He's a collector of vintage movie memorabilia on silent film star Lee Chaney. He also collects old advertising posters and moviebooks. He owns a 1946 Chevy Doo-dle, an original Charlie McCarthy and 3 Lee Chaney. He is hopefully hooked on Steve Miller (Da Da Ron Ron Run, Da Da Run Run).

To date, he has had artwork printed at the following

publications: *Art Direction*, *Cinefantasy*, *Flashback*, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, *Funk*, *Fossil on Film*, *The Film Journal*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Gore Crests*, *New Times*, *Pinup* (the Coca-Cola Magazine), *The Richmond Mercury*, *Richmond Magazine*, *Reviews*, *Sports News* (the Capital), *Southern Living*, *TV Guide* (the Capital), *Time Magazine* (the Capital) and *U.S. News & World Report* (the Capital).

He is Art Editor for PHOTON.

"And that," says Bill, "is me."



ALAN SILVER has written a study of the Samurai Film for A.S. Bernet and, in collaboration with James Ure, books on *The Vampire Myth in Film and Literature* (Barrow) and the films of David Lean (Leslie Frown, Ltd.). Other work includes reviews and articles for *Film Comment*, *Literature/Film Quarterly*, *Cost Magazine* and the *Los Angeles Free Press*.

JAMES URE has written a study of the films of Preston Sturges (Davis Books). Also, reviews and articles for *Cinema* and *Cost* and old histories for the American Film Institute. He teaches communication at El Camino College, California and is currently working on a study of Supernatural Literature and Film, along with Alan Silver. The pair collaborated on the Mario Bava piece in this issue.

FILM FANS & FANDOM

MARK FRANK

The response to this column has been extremely gratifying (jumping, perhaps, more reaction is letters than for any other feature we have run in PHOTON). But I must emphasize that it is more than just mere mention when we are after. It's not to read comments on a job well done, but it would be nice to receive direct suggestions and contributions for the regular department. Please help us to make this column as interesting and relevant as we possibly can. In times of format, we'll be presenting several reader contributions in each installment. At times, as well as the case with some of the larger projects, we're working on it. The Psychology of the Film Fan!, the entire space might be devoted to a single topic.

Before presenting our first three explorations into the world of fandom, there are a couple of housekeeping matters to which we must attend. About five hundred readers, chosen entirely at random, will be receiving a questionnaire along with their copies of this issue. A few moments spent filling it out and mailing it back to us will enable us to gather important information about fans and fandom. There's no need to reveal your name, although you may do so with the knowledge that all responses will be kept strictly confidential. Please answer all of the questions and feel free to add any comments and opinions not covered specifically by the questionnaire. Those of you not receiving it may obtain a copy by sending me a

stamped, self-addressed envelope. If you fill it out and return it we'll add your responses to those already received. We regret that we can't provide such envelopes for all of you, but we're certain you understand the financial infeasibility of such a practice.

The next order of business concerns all of you more directly. It has been a source of continual frustration to me that the press of everyday living and working, both in my own life and in the lives of all the staff and contributors, makes it impossible to publish issues of PHOTON on anything resembling a regular schedule. It is not unusual for a year or more to pass between numbers, making it hard to bring you current film and book reviews. Contributors wonder what happened to their articles and readers become equally concerned about their subscriptions.

While we will continue to try our very best to bring out issues of PHOTON as quickly as we possibly can, something else seems called for. Something that would permit us to successfully preview films before release, bring you current book and movie reviews and, in general, maintain regular contact with the readers throughout the year, regardless of how many issues of PHOTON may be published during that year. Something like a newsletter, distributed free to readers at regular intervals.

Why, you may well ask, pour time and energy into such a project when these resources can be channeled into

bringing the magazine itself out more frequently? A good question, indeed. It would actually be impossible, under my present schedule, to even think of obtaining such an additional commitment. But—and here's where you come in—we're hoping that, somewhere out there in fandom, is a person willing to take over the editorship of our newsletter. If you're interested, and willing to make a considerable contribution in terms of time, please contact me so that we can discuss the project further. I'm looking for someone who would be responsible for editing and laying out the material, sending it for printing, etc. In short, someone with experience in fanzine publishing. I'd also like to hear from all of you in general about the newsletter, your comments and suggestions are, as always, necessary for the success of the project. Whether or not it will become a reality must depend upon your enthusiasm and support.

Three aspects of fanzine life are covered in the short article which follows. David Allen, who is the author of the feature on stop-motion animation which appeared in issue #22, gets the tried and true remarks about collectors. This is followed by John Carpenter's tale of a young fan who fulfilled his dream of becoming a film director. Finally, Don Driver offers some general comments on what being a fan is all about.

ON COLLECTIONS

The general interest, if not the value, in a "collection" often diminishes in proportion to its growth, particularly when the growth is arbitrary and indiscriminate. As it enlarges, the objectives of the collector must become distinct. The question often becomes whether the urge to acquire may not be related to a deeper necessity. Ten Flamingo paintings can be absorbed and discussed. Ten thousand of them would become tedious, and adhere for each printing the individual anonymity of numbers in astronomical distances. The value of an item to a haggard observer is according not only to the interest which the subject naturally provokes, but to the background which he may or may not bring to his appreciation.



David Allen believes that collecting can be a factor of artistic frustration. Others would tend to disagree.

It is on this basis that the worth of certain exhibits, such as seen in some of our larger galleries or museums, is to be analyzed questioned. There is the artist... and there is the collector. The tendency of the first is to look forward, the other back. Somewhere in between is the critic.

Collecting is a factor of artistic frustration. The artist, generally speaking, has not the true collector's acquiring needs, though he may own the work of artists whom he particularly admires, or he may retain a good deal of his own work. What generally does motivate the collector from the artist is that the former is dominated by his past experiences, rather than inspired by them. If it is an exception, his attempts to understand the subject reflect the desire to become part of an event that has already transpired with its full effect.

—David Allen

THE GODS HATE HOLLYWOOD

Bregow "The growth on the face! I'll plant, hell. Look at this, look at what's done! The whole little structure's eaten away. The bear's powder..."

Lorenz "Well, that takes care of my upper tonight!"

The Quaternary Experience
Nigel Kneale

I think I have always known I have wanted to direct motion pictures. Sometime in 1965, in a theater in Rochester, New York, my mother took me to see IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE in 3D. The first shot I remember in the picture is a long shot of a barren desert landscape. The camera is panning with a rising plume of dust out of the sky toward stars. The second shot is of the reactor coming closer into camera and exploding. In 1963 that reactor came directly out of the screen and blew up in my face. I inherited my mother and dashed up the scale in terror. But by the time I had studied the lobby I was in love with movies.

I have also always been in love with science fiction. My young life was filled with the pulp and jubilation of NOT OF THIS EARTH, IT CONQUERED THE WORLD, and HENRY FROM SPACE. I was just eight years old when I first saw FORBIDDEN PLANET, but I and Eileen's gotten over it. The young men that watched the invisible Id create make us huge footprints in the sand of Al 4 and finally saw the thing fully illuminated in the glowing laser beams would never be the same. For a single day, did, tomorrow promised me in the blessed 2001 could start that kind of space trip.

Besides making hideous films movies about paper mache monsters I published a fan movie-maker magazine, Fantastic Film (November, for a few years. I was an adolescent and getting older and older and I had nothing else I wanted to do except make movies. I loved my parents and friends with my obsession. Finally I convinced my parents to send me off to film school, a sort of academic justification for the natural inclination.

I attended USC for four years and made several films, among them THE RESURRECTION OF BRONCHO BILLY, which mysteriously, at least to me, won the Academy Award for the Best Live Action Short Subject in 1970. I edited the film and wrote the music for it, but in terms of movement it was basically unexciting and short.

In the fall of 1970 I began work on DARK STAR, my first feature, a science fiction adventure comedy.

I directed and produced DARK STAR for what it costs a movie studio to make.

We always had no money and we always had no time. Even with the lot of money that I managed to scrape together from a few investors, it was never enough. We shot with barely adequate, poorly functioning equipment because we could afford nothing better. Our camera would rattle and pour like cocktail shakers full of glass. The color cameras rumbled on the front of the camera were pushed and heaved. They wouldn't focus. Our lights buzzed and buzzed like metallic insects waving on giant strands.

The sound stages on which we shot DARK STAR were either small and cluttered with beds and couches and lockers or were mammoth football fields with mile-high ceilings and labyrinthine corridors made of rotating wood. DARK STAR takes place in the mid twenty-second century. Four men aboard an interstellar space cruiser at the rim of the universe must battle their technology gone mad and, at the same time, withstand the boredom and misadventures of the mission. One of their talents, compressed, broken, malfunctioning, develops strange thought patterns, and threatens to blow up inside the ship.

It took me three and a half years to make DARK STAR with a cast and crew of incredibly talented people. The making of the picture is a saga of pain and blood and love. It took me a life of its own after the second year and became a sort of Frankenstein movie that demanded strength and persistence to give it birth.

DARK STAR is an inside out picture. The space ship is a bulky, impenetrable world of metallic corridors and color-coded doors and cubicles. Surrounded by impossibly functioning machinery and approved forever inside a vessel moving toward some ungraspable destination light years distant, the crew is haunted by an ambience of insanity. From the beginning I wanted the picture to have a sea look, soaring through the void as RKD Rocky Pictures circa 1950. Howard Hawks trained with Russell Mitty or Harold Rosson. Doug Keepe, the director of photography, agreed with the concept and decided that I wanted in the scene, whenever possible we used wide lenses to give the feeling of depth and moving camera to express a fluid three dimensional space, the expanse use of zooms and long lenses the death of mood and atmosphere, perhaps the most essential ingredients of any picture. Instead of empathy and evokes merit, the optical properties of the zoom produce a cold, distant distance, isolate a character against an undefined, hazy background of blur and thus suddenly sack the audience either in or out unmercifully.

The visual presentation of machines was an important part of DARK STAR. We have a bomb that can talk, a computer with a woman's voice who answers us about things to the crew, all sorts of gadgets and video chairs that whirr or rotate or do something. They're also, drastically speaking, they're characters. They often function as expository devices. In scenes where you can bring objects to life and it's a matter of course. The adult accepts it. To get away with this sort of thing we had to be very careful about the shooting of machines. Visually they had to be given a life of their own. The introduction of the female computer is a long day shot down a corridor, up to the door of the Computer Room, a device through the computer doll is shot up to the computer itself. It's a soft, fluid introduction, a gentle camera movement up to a woman's face, so to speak. The talking bombs (twelve and twenty), on the other hand, were rather robotic machines and capable of much destruction. They were given life through constantly cutting to new angles and editing each shot to make a continuous dialogue. It was harder, more stressful, a harder feeling to the personality.

Ken O'Bannon was the production designer and special effects supervisor. He is a genius of visual design and thought. Having written the script through the effects we wanted from the start. The only mistake we made was not figuring out exactly how each effect would be done.

One of the biggest problems was adding stars to outer space. The biggest one was deciding what to add stars at the same time we did the principal photography. We never added them later. I wanted the stars in focus at all times. If they had been photographed with the astronauts or the actors and sets we couldn't have gotten enough detail to tell us to copy from on both the stars in the background and an object in the foreground. It took months making and shooting starfields for each shot in the picture. This meant reworking every shot, that is, projecting the original shot on paper, punching holes in black paper with a straight pin in the desired areas, then photographing the hole with a black backing and considering everything on the optical printer. If there was an object that passed in front of the stars, I had to make and shoot holdout matter so that the stars wouldn't show through.

The strangest directorial problem I ran into was in the climax of the elevator shaft sequence. One of the astronauts shares a moment of alone time, which has escaped from the room in which it's kept, into a huge elevator shaft that runs the length of the ship. Probek is trapped on a ledge above a dizzying height and ends up hanging from the bottom of the elevator, riding up and down all it.

We built the elevator shaft horizontally, next fast long across the length of a sound stage. The most important aspect of any tension/physical action sequence is completely understanding the character. Alfred Hitchcock has demonstrated the again and again. I had an idea originally of shooting most of the shaft from a fixed camera position to give the audience the feeling that we were really in an elevator shaft, it was incredibly dangerous and the camera could only be placed in one position. After the first day's dailies I realized that that idea wasn't as important as being able to identify with the

character. I wanted the audience up there dangling with the astronaut. This would require careful structure at to point of view. Basically I had to visually construct the sequence with the camera upside down and sideways, to give the illusion that the shaft was vertical, and use subjective camera as much as possible.

With one basic feature film experience I can't begin to achieve any grasp or understanding of Hollywood and its workings. My dealings with studios and producers have me with a sense of the industrial structure of the industry, do, however, feel a great love and respect for the process of creating a motion picture. A few directors in the life-time of film, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, Luis Buñuel, Orson Welles, and a handful of others actually had a grasp of the process. The basic problem is to make the camera come with you, not for you. It is a cold, unrelenting machine that, when operating properly, runs at an absolute speed and captures only a dim impression of what is placed in front of it. The struggle is to repeat the dream machine and yet remain in control when it dictates coldness and approval and delusion.

My structural emotion has not lessened. Someone from my home town asked me, "Why do you want to direct movies? It's so hard." I think I need to consider an illusion that lives on a screen for an hour and a half. I can create worlds of fantasy and love and horror and adventure and hopefully make people feel them along with me.

But my answer was simpler. What else is there to do?

—John Carpenter

ON FANDOM

In the often lonely, always isolated world of the writer, there exists passions sometimes remaining sealed, opened and frustrated for months and years, rather like an awesome volcano put to rest by the larger forces of nature.

So, when Mark Frank, God bless him, told me about the new FOTW feature all about fans and their relationship to the world of Science Fiction, this eager reporter looked into Mark's belly buttons, and a kind "thank you" and an about wondering how to keep this monstrous subject down to reasonable proportions.

I will begin with the personal hypothesis that the Science Fiction fan, for all his characteristics, is not really the adolescent adult running about attempting to connect people that THE SPARK THAT KICKED OUT OF is a meaningful film or that John Agar represents the essence of acting ability. (This is a reversal to the criticism I have often heard, or even been subjected to, of one of "them") i.e., the SF culture, from people whose words to date is an "intellectual" orientation of sorts to things like Captain Marvel science and movie like (OSF THROAT).

Mr. friends, the SF buff is guilty of a lot of things (to be explained later), but he is NOT the ego-mad, sexually-frustrated, little kid (bucking down out of lost babies and nursing virtually) demanding attention. The many people I have met and been associated with in the field of SF tend, rather, to be very imaginative, creative and enthusiastic persons whose "addiction" to the field represents a very deep-rooted attempt to reject some of the world of "what could be" into the real and often-depressing world of "what is." These individuals, like professional writers to publishers to special effects men to high school conversion fairs to college journalism majors and even the individual content to sit down and forget the outside world with a Ray Bradbury novel, are nothing more than people whose lives have been shaped by their interest in the "other-dimension" of life itself.

This can be explained in very basic psychological terms by the self-exploration of this author, whose own SF enthusiasm was kindled early in life by Walt Disney's epic TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA. There was something so fascinating, so impossibly adventurous and other-dimensional about the film, that many of its cinematic images were retained over the years. I saw the film in 1956, and it did these things

John Carpenter peers through the camera while filming DARK STAR.

for mark a lifelong militancy was demolished regarding the existence of sea monsters and other creatures many of which have since been proved to exist in the ocean depths. Captain Nemo's entire blend of nobility and glibly spiced up his year-old mind to follow the agenda of literary and cinematic characters such as Buck Rogers, Superman, Striped the Sailor, and others when all of us share a desire to evade in a small way... and the Denysenque giant squid forever aroused an intense interest in special effects on the big screen as well as marine biology and its relationship to evolution on earth and elsewhere.

Elsewhere... this is where the experience took me, as if boarding an ingenious rocket through the endless diameter of the human imagination. The "night train to the stars," an endebolger Carl Sagan puts it, was launched in the mind of a mere youth.

At it was, I had more time for SF books and television than many others, for a physical disability restricted the ordinary kind of running around through the elementary and high school years. Scores of novels and short stories were devoured, everything from the tradition of Clarke and Heinlein to the wonders of newer genres like Ellison and Matheson.

Perhaps more than anything, it was the influence of science's OUTER LIMITS that fully developed this fan's affinity for Science Fiction. Each week, the fascination of a truly three-dimensional environment, with incredible alien costuming and fine special effects, held me captive while the intro went: "Do not attempt to adjust your set... we are controlling the vertical... we are controlling the horizontal..."

There was magic in those words, and it resides like Helen Ellison's "Golem With a Gun Hand," Joseph Skopelny's "Nightmares," the moving two-part story "The Invention" and the haunting moral of "I, Robot."

Then, of course, came STAR TREK with all its social commentary and the great new bond in the humanization of Science Fiction. Trek, McCoy and the rest all became beloved figures, comparable to their cinematic and radio counterparts, and to people we all knew at one point or another in our lives.

How does all this relate to the SF fan in general and the aforementioned decade of him as a person to be avoided and requested?

The history of my own development in the genre, and those of countless others I have read, indicates that Science Fiction fills an essential, almost mandatory gap in the human condition. In its own way, the form provides hope... hope for a today which holds promise of change and a tomorrow where things have indeed changed for the better. The meeting of earthmen and alien is not merely a fantasy... it holds answers, representations for the entire race system of our variable species, the building of advanced communications satellites and manned space vehicles is not merely a technological age trip, it symbolizes man's great need to improve himself and reach out into the heavens for answers to his own identity and the meaning of life itself. Science Fiction is a viable genre through which we can symbolize these hopes, fears, aspirations, and struggles which are an integral part of the human condition. It is an art form conducive to the adventurous writer with a bold imagination, and a lively outlet for the make-up man, the special effects aficionado, and the director. It is an entire galaxy worth of collections for the collector, funnies for the reading enthusiast, hints for the film critic, and holds vast horizons of ideas for the imaginative and contemplative.

The Science Fiction fan, as well as the genre itself, are of course not without weakness. Yes indeed, some fans do get too carried away by "technobabble" for the sake of being clever, and others flatter the "in" language which seems to constantly make sense to us as one enters the most hup among the SF crowd. The SF field, too, could use more open-mindedness, and concentrate on the production of first-class writing and film-making rather than devoting itself with arguments over what constitutes Science Fiction as opposed to Speculative Fiction or Fantasy Fiction. These arguments are for the naively-inclined, and don't uphold the character of the fan, the professional, or the genre itself.

Science Fiction fans, therefore, symbolize in a most honest sense those hopes and dreams which all people have but which most do not attain here through a chartered rights of action for all his day-dreaming, rejected short stories, subscription spending and eleven-to-nothing, the SF buff is a very sensitive human being doing to make the interesting evolution which transcends today's fiction into tomorrow's reality.

—Don Dryer

ADS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FANDOM'S FILM GALLERY is now available (60 different titles, featuring all about HORIZON OF DRACULA in story, interviews, stills, frames, artwork and lots of reviews by renowned fan critics. Price \$2 (airmail surcharge: \$1), no checks. Mail to Jan Van Gerecht, G. Van Gerecht 171, 2160 Deurne, Belgium.

BLACK ORACLE #6 is now available and features an exclusive interview with actor Forrest Tyler who discusses the making of THE CRAWLING EYE and THE ADMIRABLE SNOWMAN as well as his experiences working with Peter Cushing in the latter film. Also featured are book and movie reviews, poetry, artwork and many more items of interest. Send \$6 (or \$5 for 3 issues) to George Stover, P.O. Box 10005, Baltimore, MD 21204.

WANTED: Stills or frame blowups from any and all horror/fantasy films, past & present. Send list & photos to: K.C. Rapley, 6341 North Ave., San Gabriel, CA 91075.

CRIFAN is a magazine devoted to the serious study of the motion picture, with particular emphasis on the fantastic cinema. The first issue included articles on KING KONG, THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD, 2001, SLOUCH, Belgium to fantasy, Toho films and performers in fantasy. Five of the titles, plus interviews with Max Steiner, Lindsey Ann Ward, John Leland and Jack H. Harris. \$1.50 (outside USA: \$2.50 for airmail) from Randal D. Larson, Fandom Unlimited Enterprises, 774 Vista Grande Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022.

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Fans interested in the career of Peter Cushing will want to contact Mr. Debbie Barrett, 163 Plymouth Blvd, Smithtown, N.Y. 11787 for details about the American Peter Cushing Co.

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PHOTON

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Covuland's Bull (left) and Beid's Saka in costume of ThorCon (1972).



CINEMA BOOKSHELF

DONALD C. WILLIS

A HERITAGE OF HORROR: THE ENGLISH GOTHIC CINEMA, 1946-1972 by David Price (Oxford, Power, London, 1973, \$5.95 or Egoon Books, New York, 1974, \$2.95)

This is an excellent, well-researched and well-organized book centered primarily with Hammer Films and their products. Here's the first of this genre's horror movie era in Britain, drawing on the long-established Gothic literary tradition, which found its full flowering in Britain. He rightly points out that the reign of Hammer as a major producer of horror films has been almost 30 years, twice as long as that of Universal from the early '30s to the '40s, with sometimes lengthy gaps, and the output of Hammer has been more consistently good than that of Universal.

He's right in that people often overlook the longevity of Hammer, and that the studio deserves more praise than it's been getting. Obviously, some of their films haven't been very good, none of them have been as good as the James Whale Universal current, or as the *BLACK CAT* or *MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE*. But those were the major products of a major studio when it was doing run by active, intelligent people who cared for films and who were used to spend plenty of money. When Universal was sold by the Laskeris in the mid Thirties, the quality of its output dropped and has remained low in all areas. Virtually all of Hammer's horror films are better than virtually all of Universal's from 1930 to the present.

One of the major reasons the Laskeris left films, such as *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, are praised to the detriment of respectable Hammer films like, to be consistent, *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, is that the set decoration is of a different form of stylization. Universal relied heavily on German influenced sets, scenes, as did early Hollywood sets making horror films at the time, and people tend to think that expressionism is a somehow better than the realistic approach used by Hammer. It isn't, really, it is, however, harder to bring off successfully so that what it does succeed it is more impressive. Hammer has done more with low budgets than Universal did with high budget dollars. There is more uniformity and better taste to their sets, and to almost every aspect of production. Does anyone seriously contend that *THE MUMMY'S CURSE* is better than *THE MUMMY'S SHROUD*? That *THE MAD GROOM* is better than *THE GOBOLIN*? That *HOUSE OF DRACULA* is better than *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA*? If so, I suspect simple and artificial nostalgia to be the cause of the preference.

I believe that Hammer films are too close to most of us right now to be fairly evaluated, but Price has made a very nice case for it. It's a little startling to read a book by a man as intelligent as Price who overpraises Hammer, too often the British company is derided for its emphasis on brutality and sex, but he makes it clear that not only is the somewhat overstated but that the brutality and treatment of sex are integral to the English Gothic heritage. (His introductory chapter treats the history of Gothic literature, up to its embrace by the Surrealist movement.)

He tends to overlook the influence low budgets and pandering to public taste have had on Hammer. Universal's classics were expensively made, but Hammer has rarely spent as much as a million or any of their films, most of them cost less than half of that. Often the shows, but most often Hammer have made them I low budgets go a long, long way.

His coverage of the studio's product is extremely thorough, and he presents their good films and condenses their bad (I disagreed on several, which is to be expected). His coverage of Terence Fisher is especially fine, and his insights into Fisher's work and the director's treatment of Gialli and Fokunian are the heights of the book. Here also discusses other British companies, with an especially good section on the Sadism trio, *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM*, *CIRCUS OF HORRORS*, and *PEEPING TOM*. But the emphasis is definitely on Hammer.

For someone like myself, who quite literally grew up with Hammer films as a major part of my fledgling diet and who has felt that the studio has been rightly damned in recent years, this book is like discovering a long-lost friend.

Price is definitely more inclined to the writer theory than I; occasionally this leads him down strange byways—his praise Verne Sewell, for instance—but since this theory has never been intelligently applied to the genre before, and since Price's arguments are backed up with such fine research, he is quite convincing most of the time.

The best critics of any art form are those which produce an "Exactly!" reaction in the reader, they envision or demonstrate things about the material (especially material the reader is very familiar with) which were invisible to the artist at a local level. The best answers. In this book, for example, Price points out that not only is the character of Count Dracula derived indirectly from that of Lord Byron, but so is that of Peter Cushing's Baron Frankenstein. (There's a topic for an article: the influence of Byron on Frankenstein.) Price is right in seeing this book. I experienced the "Exactly!" reaction, to things I was subconsciously aware of which Price has brought to the fore.

Despite a real tendency to overpraise and over interpret, this is the best book on horror films since the late '60s. *CLASH* is a solid, well-researched, carefully written, and highly impressive. It belongs in the library of every serious fan of horror movies.

THE ORACULA BOOK by Don Galt (Somerset Press, New Jersey, 1975, \$12.95)

Don Galt's *The Oracula Book* is the kind of book I hate to pick up. Because I know that once I do—once I start browsing through it—it will be difficult to stop. Checklists like Walt Lee's and my own (Reference Guide to Fantastic Films and Horror and Science Fiction Films, respectively) present a similar problem. These are main reference works that books to read straight through, but they offer their own type of reading pleasure, which is more or less irrelevant to whatever value they may have as reference material. They rely on pleasure to you to begin at the beginning and consider all the references. They're informal, and resting in their informality. You can pick them up and put them down at your leisure, without fear of missing out on continuity, consistency of scene and setting, or authorial grand design.

That is, you can try to put them down. But fun books like my friend Don Galt's must be left to go. *The Oracula Book* does have a kind of continuity, one thing about lead to another, then another, then another, but not necessarily in the written sequence. You start in anywhere and go forward or backward, completely, from one chapter to another. You can also stop, backtrack, jump

in your own subliminal addition, or even read a chapter for the whole book from beginning to end and the way it was compiled to read. *The Oracula Book* is not so much comprehensive as subjective—it gives you everything, no matter how trivial. In fact, it's the trivia that's important finally. You may think you know all there is to know about the subject of Oracula in film, literature, and music, but Galt's primary purpose is, in effect, to prove you wrong. His study encompasses a large amount (the large reality) of material familiar to the horror fan, as do all other comprehensive checklists and source books. But the fun lies in the things he tacks on to the facts and figures of common knowledge, and in the things he tacks on to the things he tacks on. The amount of apparently insignificant data he puts on with some attention for a job well and thoroughly done. The book comes when you realize that all of this is now common knowledge—the lengths the most Oracula geek might wish to go to top Galt!

The Oracula Book is a somewhat fast-paced to fast notes to footnotes. Start with a plain, simple "ORACULA: A DREAM" as an Italian film made by Luigi Cozzi" (page 213) in which Oracula appears. Then, next sentence: "The footage was then included in Galt's 1970 film *TUNNEL UNDER THE MOON*." Oracula appears in the actual footnote: "Galt included scenes from *TUNNEL UNDER THE MOON* in his film *IL VICINO DI CASA*..." Finally, something things a little more with "TUNNEL" also featured a scene with Count Oracula, the Oracula character of the next *ORACULA*! Serpents move begins with the word "Oracula," but the way it's used what makes the book, this going on like that. You wouldn't be at all surprised to learn in the supplement that Galt's latest film, the sequel to *IL VICINO DI CASA*, is in fact a remake of an obscure 1960 Yugoslav vampire epic, which was only the first and last in a long series of eight or nine films that have been made entirely of outtakes from the other eight and thus not really counting. It's the kind of voraciousness that drives me to compiling checklists, and to devouring, perhaps not whole but in bits, books like *The Oracula Book*.

—Don Willis

MOVIE MAGIC by John Brown (Bantam's Press, New York, 1974, \$3.95)

Movie Magic is published full of vital facts has been presented in a multitude of articles and columns down through the years. Yet, after over 75 years of technical wizardry, a thorough and entertaining review of movie happenings and those who perform them remained elusive. Undoubtedly, that is, until John Brown came along with his absorbing work, *Movie Magic*.

Movie Magic is a detailed account spanning the entire gamut of movie special effects. An impressive 296 pages, it covers virtually every major effects film from *TRIP TO THE MOON* to the *RODENT ADVENTURE*, with pointers on the work of M.G.M., J.B. Brown, Disney, Universal, and D.N.E. (Dorland Jennings, B.I. Abbott and the British cameramen). Most appreciated is the recognition given to a wide range of artists who finally emerge from a world of obscurity after so many years of neglect.

Readers of *PWD* will be instantly surprised to see repeated segments of the definition *Movie Magic* is featured in issue #20. Also included are additional interviews with veteran effects artists, including many still active in the field. Fans of film fantasy will relish the many backstage tidbits provided. A. Lee Brown, the technical director of *THE GODFATHER*, *THE CRAWLING EYE* and the *QUATERS* series. Brown, in particular, reveals the very real hardships imposed on the movie magician with regard to budgetary limitations.

Stylistically, *Movie Magic* is crisp and concise. With the exception of a few artist artist, Albert Brown leaves not a stone unturned. In short, the book is a treat for film buffs, students of special effects and just about anyone interested in what goes on behind the scenes. Unlike many other current film books, the work that went into *Movie Magic* more than justifies its cover price.

—Paul Marshall

(Continued from page 4)

they might obtain copies of the author's multi-volume work. *The Definitive Study of the Hammer Film*, good stuff can't be too obvious, but neither did we bargain for such a large-scale misreading. Our efforts this case are, therefore, much more modest than we hope—just as appreciable. Our current target is the world of movie posters, a world often associated with being and being not to be found on the movie screen themselves. Dave Ludwig, Mark McGee and Cynthia Roberts try to peek fun at the absurdity of some of these advertisements without losing respect for the excitement and anticipation they continue to inspire.

Elsewhere in the issue, we present the first real installment of our "Film Fans and Fandom" column. You'll read what three readers have to say about

collecting, filmmaking and being a fan, respectively. It goes without saying that we invite each of you to write about any aspect of fandom which interests you, so that your own thoughts and opinions can be shared with other readers. While we're on the subject, let me make my usual path for reader comments and suggestions about anything in the magazine. We do try to offer what we think you want to see, but it's not to let us know where we have gone wrong.

Some special thanks are in order for some very special people. Much of our "new look" in format and layout is the work of Dave Ludwig, who continues to surprise me with the amount of time and effort he is willing to expend for the magazine. Also deserving of both thanks and an apology is Mark McGee, who wrote the first draft of a *CURSE OF THE DEMON* feature which was later used by Brent and McGee as a jumping-off point for their own

analysis. Scott McGee, is, himself, accorded a drop and proper respect. Scott graciously submitted an extensive questionnaire brought about by his generous involvement with *PWD*.

Sadly, we dedicate this issue to the memory of Rod Serling, a man whose premature death will be mourned by many. Those of us who grew up intimately aware of the real Serling, still being typified in the *Twilight Zone* TV sets will always be thankful for the imagination he poured through our phosphor dots each week. For every replete episode of "Night Gallery," there are still two or three fine "Twilight Zone" excursions which are, fortunately, still being typified in the *Twilight Zone* TV sets.

Next issue, we're preparing a book at a familiar film, *HORROR OF ORACULA*, from some unfamiliar points of view. But, for now, enjoy this issue and please let us hear from you.

PREVIEWS & POSTVIEWS

FLESH GORDON A Menzoth Film Release. A Griffith Production. In Menzoth's 78 minutes. Directed by Michael Benveniste and Howard Ziehm. Associate Producer: Walter R. Colby. Edited by Abbot Aron. Director of Photography: Howard Ziehm. Cinematographer: Lynn Rogers. Screenplay by Michael Benveniste and William Hunt. Art Director: David Hertz. Costumes by Ruth Ghert. Makeup: Rijo Tumble. Lighting: Ral Canavese. Properties: Tom Reamy. Sound: John Brasher. Special Visual Effects Created by David Allen and My Hirohara. Special Miniatures Construction by Greg Jeni. Effects Technician: Douglas Brown. Risk Baker, Greg Jeni, Russ Turner, Greg Neuwenger. Special Optical Effects. Costume Research: Ray Mercer. Music by Peter Tawer.

Cast: Jason Williams (Flash Gordon), Suzanne Fields (Dale Arden), Joseph Hudson (Dr. Jerkoff), William Hunt (Emperor Wang), John Hoyt (Professor Gordon), Myka Bready, Mary Watsmark, Candy Samples, Steven Guttentag, Lanie Lissen, Judy Zabin

For those of us who look with fondness on those Saturday matinee serials of the past and especially Buster Crabbe's cosmic adventures on Mars and Mongo **FLESH GORDON** offers another look at the super hero, albeit with some startling changes.

What began as a handsome porno film has been converted into an imaginative adult comic strip high lighted by sight gags and some impressive special effects. Most of the explicit sex scenes have been deleted to make the film acceptable to a wider audience. As the basis for the screenplay, Michael Benveniste has used the first chapter of Universal's initial **FLASH GORDON** serial. The Earth, instead of being plighted by hurricanes and earthquakes generated by the rogue planet Mongo, is struck by a sex beam which threatens mankind as a series of sexual chases directed from the perverted world of Porno. Flash, Dale Arden and Dr. Flash Jerkoff take off in the good doctor's phallic shaped rocket-ship to prevent disaster.

All the familiar characters are here. Both Suzanne Fields, as a cute but dumb blonde Dale, and Jason Williams, the hunk but not too bright Flash, play their roles straight and are but pawns to the sexual agenda

them. The deposed Prince Baron has transmuted into Prince Precious, the gay leader of a band of merry men and flower children who inhabit the Forest Kingdom and contribute the resistance to Emperor Wang's tyranny.

If further evidence were needed as to the model for the film, the producers have had Joseph Hudson, as Dr. Jerkoff, assume Frank Shannon's Irish accent making him the most outstanding characterization. The greatest pit down of all these brilliant elements of cinema's past occurs when the rocket lands on Porno and Jerkoff, followed by Flash and Dale, escape from the ship, without the benefit of those artificial life support systems so prevalent today and Jerkoff remarks "Good. There's oxygen on this planet."

The most unsatisfying role is that of William Hunt as the degenerate Emperor Wang whose makeup is so overdone as to make him appear more at home in the **MILKAD** than a sex lord. The film should have stayed closer to the original. Who has forgotten the last on-screen in the ludicrous Wang's eyes when, upon seeing Dale Arden, he proclaims "You are beautiful." We needed a Charles Middleton but are given a clown.

Venerable character actor John Hoyt has a brief appearance as Flash's father, Professor Gordon.

In this comic world Volkswagen keys start up the rockets, umbrellas substitute for jetpacks and the Menzothosphere around the Earth is a space garbage dump littered with discarded cigarette packs and milk can tins. A wedge is taken at women's lib and the meniscus metaphor when the heroic trio prepare for their flight to Porno. Flash enters the rocket carrying two light bulbs and asks Jerkoff where they should be stowed. As he moves from the doorway, Dale struggles in carrying a heavy canister. Much of the proceedings will be missed of bed taste. Bad, but funny. The use of sex as an interesting way to satirize a film which the passage of time has made a parody of itself.

There are three animation segments and a trio of murders. Shortly after arriving on Porno the Earth people are attacked by several Penisauri which resemble the name they bear. Dale, of course, gets most of their attention. Later, having rescued Dale from the wretched alienness of a race of lesbians predated over by a metal

liger, cigar smoking queen whose right hand has been replaced with a hook, Flash is forced to battle the horrendous beetle man. The man sized insect attacks with his lobster like claws in a heroic position. This sequence involves the most interaction between the live actors and animation.

Finally, Wang brings the giant idol of All Perfection to life which carries Dale off to the top of the Tower of Murder (that's where he murders people, he explains). Here the creature tears the destructive Dale's dress off and provides his rebirth of her endowments.

Greg Jeni's miniatures and sets are well detailed and he presents several different views for the film. Aside from Jerkoff's rocket there is the ladybug fleet of Prince Precious, Wang's dragonfly ship, and the Swastika craft used by Queen Astoria. As time slips through the net, one is reminded of the excellent work of the Lydecker at Republic studios.

Although the musical score has the flavor of the thirties, it would have been more effective to have used the classical themes employed in the original and familiar to all who have enjoyed those films.

FLESH GORDON succeeds where **BARBARELLA** failed. It is one of the best satirical films in recent years and is easily the most entertaining porno film I've condensed to put it in that category.

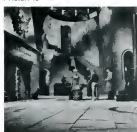
—Dan Soggett

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN Released by 20th Century-Fox Film Corp., 1974. 104 minutes. Directed by Mel Brooks. Produced by Michael Gruskoff. Screenplay by Gene Wilder and Mel Brooks. Based on the characters in the novel *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. Director of Photography: Donald Hirschfeld, A.S.C. Music Composed and Conducted by John Morris. Orchestrated: Jonathan Tunick. Visual Style by Gerald Vinik. Film Editor: John Hawken. Production Designer: Dale Henney. Set Decorator: Bob De Vries. Assistant Director: Marvin Miller. 2nd Assistant Director: Barry Stern. Unit Production Manager: Frank Saur. Costume by Mike Pearson & Jane Pearson. Makeup by William Tuttle. Costume Designer: Dorothy Jenkins. Sound Editor: Don Hall. Special Effects: Henry Miller & Mel Miller. Special thanks to Kenneth Schindler for original Frankenstein laboratory equipment.

Cast: Gene Wilder (Dr. Frankenstein), Peter Boyle (The Monster), Mary Feldman (Igort), Madeline Kahn (Elizabeth), Cloris Leachman (Frau Blucher), Teri Gar (Sag), Kenneth Mars (Inspector Kemp), Richard Haydn (Herr Felsentien), Lew Durr (Mr. Wilcox), Danny Goldman (Medical Student), Leon Askin (Herr Waldner), Oscar Bereg (Sadist Jailer), Lou Castel (Frightened Villager), Arthur Maat (Village Elder), Richard Roth (Inspector Kemp's Aide), Monte Landis & Rusty Bitts (Grossgrander), Anne Bentley (Little Girl), Terence Paden (Dr. Villager), Ian Abernethy (Dr. Villager), Randolph Dobbs (Dr. Villager), Gene Hackman (Blindman).

BELOW: Flash, Dale and Jerkoff are attacked by the fearsome penisauri, animated by Bill Sedge. **RIGHT:** The giant idol of All Perfection pauses on its rampage to admire itself in a mirror. Both sequences can be seen in **FLESH GORDON**.





Three of the elaborate sets from **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**, which pay tribute to the early Universal horror films.

YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN is terrific. It is one of the best films of 1974 (certainly the funniest), being topped only by **CHINATOWN** and equaled only by **PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE**. It is also the best film I've seen yet from Mel Brooks. I thought that **THE PRODUCERS** was too long and too rambled in spots; at its best, it was excellent, at its worst it was embarrassing. **THE TWELVE CHAIRS** was forgettable, with a few bright moments. And **BLAZING SADDLES** is, for me, a prime example of how to do almost every scene in a satire.

Since I think that the contrast between **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** and **BLAZING SADDLES** is so marked and says so much about satire in films, I'll first a few words about the earlier film. Yes, it is funny, yes, it is well acted. But the director is a new. Satire has got to be approached very seriously and very carefully, such effect has to be calculated to a given end, and that is to point up the weaknesses of a genre or of a specific film or of other aspects of life by treating them comically.

Stripped of the comic approach, the plot of a satire must very clearly resemble that of a true but serious example of the genre being satirized. This is the only way that connotations of the genre can be shown to be true or overworked, and this is exactly what **BLAZING SADDLES** fails to do. There are some scenes in the film which successfully do take off an animal overused in Westerns, and the very basic, crude structure somewhat resembles a standard cleanup-the-town cowboy movie. But too many other elements are thrown in—spies to the camera and the like—and the whole ending is left bitter and entirely unconvincing as to what the director is saying. **BLAZING SADDLES** is a pile of crap. Mel Brooks is a good enough director that much of it works as comedy. Gene Wilder, largely wasted here, makes the best of his few opportunities. Harvey Korman manages to run off with everything else. But the whole approach of the film is wrong, it is, as I said before, a mess. The satire is using the best actors in the film.

On the other hand, **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** is almost a total success in the same areas that **BLAZING SADDLES** fails. The intent of **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** (and, I think, that title itself) is to take off the horror genre. **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** is almost perfect in its lampoon of the old Universal series. This is done with such care and accuracy that the film is a legitimate entry in the series. The sets, costumes, and lighting are so accurate that the look of the film looks like shot from the Universal film, with the only change being the actors. (The wrong note is the costume Mary McCormack wears as Igor; it looks like that worn by Vincent Price in the climax of **FIT AND THE REMOULOU**, and like nothing in any of the Universal series.) Even the sets and camera work are brilliantly satirical; the walls are just a little higher than in the Universal films, there never were quite so many shadows, the rain is just a little too heavy. The black-and-white photography is excellent.

There is very little extraneous material, occasionally a line is inserted simply because it's funny ("Parlon me now, is this the Transylvanian Station?" "Yes sir, track twenty nine. Now, how about a show?"), and there is some business with no one being able to understand Kenneth Mars' Azelel like Inspector which is incongruous and funny, but these bits are few and far between. Overall, the film is a precise and careful reworking of elements from many of the old Universal Frankenstein films, primarily the three with Karloff as the monster.

The movie is funny, but the most surprising, for me, the most successful element is the serious one. For the first time since James Whale's **BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN** and certain bits of Peter Jackson's performance as Baron Frankenstein, the driving force behind Dr. Frankenstein's obsession is uncomically and excellently brought to the fore in the case of the creation of the Monster.

Wilder goes one better, instead of sending the physician with the Monster's body off to up to meet the lightning alone, he sends the platform up himself, standing beside the monster, and giving a speech about why he's

trying to accomplish his life-creating ends.

The speech is hyperbole, it's true, most audiences will probably laugh. But, for me, Wilder's performance and the lines themselves were intensely moving and exciting while remaining funny. He restores the objectives of Dr. Frankenstein as exciting and so accurately as to replace every Frankenstein movie ever made. It is the best single speech in a Frankenstein film since Clive's in the first from Universal. (The "I am crazy" speech, but even nothing in context to any specific or any other Frankenstein film I've seen.) If I am to be dwelling on the monologue, it is only because I think it is just that important. Early drafts of the script have different speeches, none not nearly so effective. The result is what counts, and it is magnificent.

Another serious sequence is at the end in an attempt to save the life of his Monster, whom he has come to love. Dr. Frankenstein exchanges some small fluid—or something—with him like setup in a handkerchief instead of the love of FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN. Since most of you will see this film for reasons which have nothing to do with the plot, it isn't hurting anything to tell you he's successful, and the Monster leaps to his feet in the nick of time, a whole man, gifts and persona in his speech. And this is another fine bit of film. The Monster is never given, which have never been mentioned directly in Frankenstein films before, the close relationship between Frankenstein and his Monster. The speech is short but most effective as the Monster tells what Frankenstein means to him (Brooks has admitted to inventing that, but his film is far better about the new sexual love of two men for each other).

But there's more to the film than those two speeches. Wilder is excellent throughout. While Peter Boyle does something to Karloff, he is an original Monster, and does more with that part than I would have thought possible. The rest of the actors are good, but are mostly doing for the ride, they do well in their parts, especially Cloris Leachman and Melvyn Frank. But the show belongs to Wilder and Brooks.

Feldman's Igor, the blind hunch of Gene Hechman, and Kenneth Mars' old-eyed, one-eyed Inspector are obviously derived from previous Frankenstein movies. Most of what they do, therefore, has been determined by those earlier films; there's not much room in the parts. But they do well.

Aside from the few instances I mentioned above, there is hardly a wrong move in **Young Frankenstein**. Just about every one, like what Wilder and Boyle do on a stage in small movements, that there is no room to let them all. He is not a showy director by any means; his films are all told simply and straightforwardly. What he adds is consistency to the performances, a unifying vision, and a sense of pace.

Sooner or later some studio had to attempt a full-blown lampoon of **FRANKENSTEIN**, like Polanski did with **DRACULA FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS**. I don't think anyone could have readily done better than Brooks and Wilder have done here, their love and knowledge of the old films is the saving grace of the picture for horror movie fans.

But if that's all **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** was—a careful reworking of elements from the old pictures, which would satisfy only horror movie buffs—it wouldn't be worth taking about except in a footnote. It's more than that, much more. It's a fine comedy and a serious picture about scientific exploration.

That sounds pompous, but it's true nonetheless. In recent years, such topics have become unfashionable to be treated seriously, emphasis has been taken off scientific research and placed on humanism, as if the two cannot be joined (but **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN** does join them). The tragedy of most Frankenstein movies is that they are tragedies; Dr. Frankenstein often makes a good case for his work, the only problem being how to get his monster. But apparently, since it's evident in Mary Shelley's book, there must be a drawback ending. It transpired in God's

Domain, and he must suffer the consequences. But, goddammit, Dr. Frankenstein was right, his researches, fictional. Though they are, could eventually lead to enormous good for mankind.

This is an overweighing the material; it is there and has been at along Brooks and Wilder know this, and for the first time I can recall offhand, a film ends with both Dr. Frankenstein and the Monster alive. Frankenstein is indicated, he wins, he is successful, just as he should have been all along. And this upbeat ending is one of the triumphs of **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**, the best Frankenstein movie since **BRIDE**.

—Bill Warren

(Author's Note: The above review was written subsequent to my making a preliminary rough cut of **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**. I have since had the opportunity to see the finished print and, while my initial enthusiasm had been somewhat dampened, the result is almost as good a film as I expected.)

I still have some reservations. Occasionally, the action simply stops for more-or-less elaborate sight gags (such as Brooks' cafe "blitz") which can be quite irritating. There's a long (too long) sequence in Frankenstein's medical class, another in which he's being strangled by the Monster, and one when he discovers that the beast used belonged to someone (Igor) thought was named "Adey". (I imagine much of this was due to Brooks' long stay in television writing, since it is strictly sitcom stuff, albeit funny.)

The sophisticated satire sometimes clashes with low brow slapstick comedy in **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**. Hopefully Brooks, an extremely intelligent man, will, in future projects, find the balance between to really sell the satire and the slapstick into two separate films.—SW)

THE STEFFORD WIVES A Columbia Pictures and Palomar Pictures International Release. A Faden/Cinema Associates Production. Produced by Edgar J. Schenck, Directed by Bryan Forbes, Executive Producer: Guiseppe M. Berne, Associate Producer: Roger M. Rothman, Screenplay by William Goldstein, Director of Photography: Owen Roizman; Music Composed and Conducted by Michael Small, Production Designer: Gene Carleton, Film Editor: Timothy Gray, Costume Designer: Anne Hill Johnson, Assistant Director: Peter Scopus, Makeup: Andy Greenfield, Set Designer: Robert Dunsmuir, Hair Designer: Rosemary Green.

Cast: Katherine Ross (Jeanne), Paula Prentiss (Bobby), Peter Masterson (Walter), Neelke Newman (Carol), Tina Louise (Charmaine), Carol Ronney (Dr. Fawcett), William French (like McCord), Carol Marley (Kit Sanderson), Tom Red (Marek Kinski), Judith Baldwin (Mrs. Correll), Barbara Baskin (Wendy Ann Stravinski), Claude Akins (George Corl), Robert Fells (Raymond Chandler), Mary Stuart Mastranton (Kim), Ronny Seltzer (Amy), and Patrick O'Neal (Dale Cole).

THE STEFFORD WIVES is a prime example of what happens when screenwriters and directors who don't know a thing about science fiction try to create it. Beneath the thin veneer of pretty faces and pretty clothes offered up by director Bryan Forbes and scripter William Goldstein is a tiny heap of bony, ball-formed bones. **Stefford** is an effort to bridge the community near New York City, and to move a lawyer (Peter Masterson) and his photographer wife (Katherine Ross). All the ladies of **Stefford** are docile, prettified housewives, and it becomes obvious to Joanne as early as that the women are robots, designed by their husbands. Everything is beautifully telegraphed. Patrick O'Neal plays a man whose nickname is "Doc." He once worked at Disneyland. A bit later, Joanne exclaims, "These women eat like robots from Disneyland!" Forbes gives us many shots of innumerable electrical wires compress the don the countryside, and when Joanne snatches a knife into the middle of her slowly altered, bear friend Bobby (Paula Prentiss) there is no blood, just a

mind reclamation and sudden robotic reawakenings about it. And, I found myself thinking, they're replacing these bodies with androids. But now what? But nothing. That's it. That is a movie? It's not even a springboard. At the climax, Joanna is confronted by her figure-reversed duplicate, a beautiful but unfurnished creature with glimmering black eyes. The android knows a scarf and moves toward the camera. The concluding scenes show the housewives gently pushing their carts along the aisles of the food supermarket. They all smile blandly and say, "Why hi, how are you?" Joanna is one of them.

Not only does Galois's tomorrow display an intelligence or ability to come to grips with problems and ideas of a complexity greater than those in the June 1942 issue of *Mix* Fun Comics, but it shows a glistening rhapsody as well. At the climax, Rosa demands of O'Hair, "Why?" His reply of "Because we can" may be cheating, but it's much of an answer. Why would men brilliant enough to create such artificial beings refuse to serve them? Are the menfolk too terribly insecure? What might man want to live with a shallow doll? ("Archie" is a word used by the androids to know? Why don't the men think big and optate coexistence as the answer to a smelter? If the foregoing is too abstract for quick consideration, how about this: what gay would care to stick it as an android? Met this one.

Why does Rosa's husband agree to the scheme? Forbes gives us no indication that the character did as or wants to live. How in the world do the men of *Stepford* as a newswoman if he'd like to trade in his wife for a Mafiaman? And why? Why agree for your exploitation by having the subject take a recital of thousands of words when a pre-programmed standard vocabulary set to an elementary videotape would be so much simpler? Why the hell does the already anxious Rosa decide to spend an evening taking her voice, and if the men have decided that "android" is an unnecessary word, why does the list include "truth" and "love" too?

THE STEPFORD WIVES is based on a novel by Iris Levin, and is newly critical in its stance to the film version of its Rosemary's Baby. That it is done with none of Polanski's ferocity should be obvious, though STEPFORD ostensibly dabbles in "woman's lib" and the absurd position of females in this country, it doesn't come close to making Polanski's sensitivity to the social sublimity of women. Forbes is most successful when recycling the staple clichés of tales of children which turn out to be an impostor, feet packing along a shadow hallway, the old hand horribly changed, and the thunderstorm/dark mansion drama, which is welcome. Thriller director has done none from such striking viewpoints since the 1950s, but Forbes renounces the tradition with some effectiveness. By and large, however, the director aims for slow and easy shocks, which is a mistake when working with such a thin story—something this barrenness of the film it can get. Forbes delivers just a couple of good ones when Rosa drastically buries into her husband on a darkened staircase, and, later, when she whacks him on the head with a poker when he refuses to tell her where their children have been taken.

In trying to create fast tenses and disquiet, Forbes leaves up crowd bait personal landscapes with rattling foreground/background focus shifts, etc., and only manages to avoid one of the brilliance of *Rebecca* Ring's countryside scenes in the opening of DON'T LOOK NOW.

Paula Prentiss, with those marauding long limbs, big boned, and quirky face, steals every scene she's in. While Katherine Ross is nice in that she's personally despicable as well as lovely (unlike a, say, Cybil Shepherd), the simply hasn't the opportunity or direction to compete with Prentiss. When the heroine is assuaged by a supporting character, something is terribly wrong. Ross is useful enough to make Joanna a believable character, but I was really more depressed by the loss of Prentiss' disfigured eccentric, Bohannon Bobby.

Breeds being benefit of ideas, Forbes fails to create a uniform, truthful tone. Tina Louise, who is 41, plays a housewife who is aspedic in the course of the film, and looks like one of those unbelievably beautiful plastic ladies from *Nigger* not only after her replacement but, ironically, before it as well, so Forbes throws away what could have been a startling contrast. There is a point beyond which viable allegory slips over into the ludicrous and Forbes goes, or stumbles, past it. Unusually conversed to begin with, his android housewives are so artificial and steeped in the stuff of TV commercials that the audience starts at their rictus better instead of going generosely or reflectively.

Most critical, yet, of course, that the film on general principle, without regard to the general Forbes and Goodman let dribble through their fingers. It's fun to think that Forbes anticipated this, for when Rosa loses her husband, a thread of blood spatters across the cover of an issue of *The New Yorker*, is this the director taking a swing at Pauline Kael before she has a chance to unload on him?

—David Hogan

PHASE IV Released by Paramount Pictures, 1934. As Acid Rodomus 91 minutes. Is tele. Directed by Bud Bass. Produced by Paul Rodin. Screenplay by Mayo Simon. Director of Photography: Dick Bush. Special Art Photography: Ken Middleham. Set Designer John Barry. Music Composed & Conducted by Brian Gascoigne. Electronic Real and with David Vanhaas. Montage Music by Yarnaphis. Production Manager: Eve Morley. Camera Operator: Dennis Lemmon. Sound: Norman Holland. Assistant Director: Bill Cardidge. Continuity: Pamela Carlson. Special Effects: John Richardson. Costume Designer: Vienna Coleman. Prost John Bonnet. Stills: Ken Humphries. Unit Publicist: Ann Arnold. Editor: Wally Scampor. Special Effects Assistant: Noddy Clark. Special Effects Assistant: Kenji. Camera Operator: Cuz. Nigel Dawson (Hubb), Lynne Frederick (Kendall), Michael Murphy (Larkin), Alan Gifford (Mr. Eldridge), Helen Horton (Mrs. Eldridge), Robert Henderson (Clint).

It is hard to consider the new Paramount movie, PHASE IV, without recalling THEM!, THE NAKED JUNGLE in THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE. The last movie in the older movie by the new film is ideologically similar though not visually correct.

PHASE IV opens by observing a cosmic phenomenon. Phase One details the results of the occurrence, specifically on a colony of ants in remote Arizona. It combines developments among the ants with the narration by humans that something unprecedented is happening. The second phase deals with the mobilized reaction to the newly-created conditions within the

colony while the third phase shows how the ants react to inspection and interference. Phase Four involves the emergence of a New Order. During the recurrence of the small incidents, mankind successfully battles its chance to remain ruler of creation.

Various penalties in man's triumph over nature are shown to be not insurmountable. The society and comfort assured by an electric heating complex proves not all that safe. A hermetically sealed, experimental station turns out to be no more unassailable than the housing project. The awful effectiveness of insecticide proves completely inefficient when put to their intended use. One of man's supreme technological accomplishments, the computer, is shown as a very fragile and destructible invention. And man's finest mechanical achievement, the automobile, proves even easier to negate human ingenuity, resource and presumption are then summarily wiped away.

PHASE IV is an example of the new breed of SF movie. It isn't a film, it's a movie on our current reality. The play is that PHASE IV is not involved with complexity or in more sophisticated terms, it's not a need extensive knowledge of science fiction elements and modern theories to realize the ideas in the movie are just liberally "concerned" and "ecology conscious." When hoping for something more than science in an SF movie today it isn't enough that the ants are not insects seemed by The Bomb, green manhood and destructive. Neither the director, Saul Bass, nor the screenwriter, Mayo Simon, have accepted the challenge of their premise.

The movie fails, at one time, a final montage showing fantastic evolutionary upheaval. This was dropped by the studio as being too abstract and speculative and a new ending was edited on. I wish the makers had felt less sense of themselves. Whatever fascination the movie builds is repaid by the abruptness of the current finale. It is also apparent that the plot elements ("daddy deader") trapping a cross section of humanity, civilization at bay) are not redefined enough to discover any new herbs or newports.

It also seemed sufficient for Simon to portray characters as their most stereotypical levels. The average people shown in the film are uniformly drawn. Their common denominator—fruity—is annoyingly apparent. They will suffer for their flaws. Dr. Hubb (Nigel Dawson) is a scientist, with a scientist's belief that all things can be explained and dealt with according to the scientific method. They cannot be, and Hubb's foundation crumbles. The human race must rely on the nobility and instability of Kendall Eldridge (Lynne Frederick) and the games theories and machinations of James Larkin (Michael Murphy).

It was surely the creative possibilities of the concept which excited Saul Bass in his first directorial effort. The genius of Bass, as recorded and awarded, has been in deepening atmospheric evocations which frame the films they announce. WALK ON THE WILD SIDE, PSYCHO, giving people a foretaste of what to expect. No man seems to be long-play idea. The triumph of Bass' skill here is that the movie lives with an atmosphere of the non-human and the mysterious.

Part of this is expressed in what is literally a moribund form. His play with form is somewhat abstract, and occasionally it is difficult to know how some forms relate. They might have been more concise and meaningful as

BELOW: THE STEPFORD WIVES; woman altered to conform to their husband's ideals of perfection. Left to right: Toni Field, Carol Mal-lory, Tina Louise, Katharine Ross, Paula Prentiss, Barbara Ruoker, Rosette Newman & Judith Baldwin. The film is a prime example of what happens when those unfamiliar with science fiction try to create it. RIGHT: Lynne Frederick is mystified by a super-intelligent ant in PHASE IV.



introduction to some other movie, true, since they haven't been fully injected into the advance of the story. They are, nevertheless, beautiful to look at.

The very opening of the film, as with 2001 (in which PHASE IV owns a large debt), introduces the location with shape and form. The repeated station looks like a three-dimensional model of the solar system, filled with IBM machines. We see the perverse beauty of three holes in a man's hand. Seven and towers look like the moonlit in SPACE ODYSSEY, while reminding the moviegoers of the same. The moviegoers are finally given as the artists themselves: close-ups of multifaceted eyes and vivid bodies.

The subsequent use of the motif is no less suggestive of strange intelligence at work. An alien field has a perfect ring out from it. The repeated station looks like a three-dimensional model of the solar system, filled with IBM machines. We see the perverse beauty of three holes in a man's hand. Seven and towers look like the moonlit in SPACE ODYSSEY, while reminding the moviegoers of the same. The moviegoers are finally given as the artists themselves: close-ups of multifaceted eyes and vivid bodies.

If anything took the compelling use of form in visualizing the story, it is the bi-photographic depiction of the arts. Newton have been such small creatures been so wondrously depicted and observed in a fictional film. Special credit goes to cinematographer Ron Minkoffman for his patience and attention to their every action (and to Ben who, I assume, must have been the editor). The arts are made real, active characters in the story. Possibly the most astounding scene comes to us, with masterfully masterful effects, the arts are connecting among themselves about a native grain of poison.

PHASE IV reveals in its structure and form, and enters to most with them. Ben is much at exploring the human quality of a new society co-existent with our own but virtually invisible to us. For these years, it's not far from the implied warnings, the movie deserves to be seen.

—David Macdonald

IT'S ALIVE Warner Brothers, 1974. In Technicolor, A Luma Production. Produced, Directed and Written by Larry Cohen; Co-Producer: Janice Cohen, Executive Producer: Peter Seaton, Photographed by Frank Hamilton, Music Composed & Conducted by Bernard Herrmann; Edited by Peter Haines, Makeup by Rick Baker.

Cast: John Ryan (Frank Davis), Sharon Farrell (Lynette Davis), Andrew Duggan (The Professor), Guy Stockwell (Clayton), James Diaz (Lt. Perkins), Michael Ansara (The Captain), Robert Emhardt (The Executive), William Wellman Jr. (Charles), Sherry Locke (The Doctor), Mary Nancy Sutton (The Nurse), Daniel Hoffman (Steve's son), Dana Hale (Sherry's), Patrick Macauliffe, Gerald York, Jerry Hall, David Roberts, and W. Allen York (Expectant Father).

A movie new score by Bernard Herrmann, an imaginative script, good direction, as well as a creative use of both photography and makeup all combine to make IT'S ALIVE one of the better horror films released during 1974. It's also, quite unfortunately, one of the least seen genre productions of last year. Inexplicably (since it displays a vast potential to reap far greater profits if promoted properly), Warner Brothers opted to "dump" the production off onto the rural drive-in circuits without any form of advance publicity to speak of, let alone standard theatrical release. It was at such a drive-in showing that this reviewer was fortunate enough to catch it, where it took place a double bill co-starring a film which deservedly belonged there, Marlon Brando's latest lapse into mediocrity, CHASE.

Like Tobe Hooper's THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE, IT'S ALIVE is virtually a one-man production, with Larry Cohen producing, directing and scripting. The film opens quietly enough, with leading characters Lynette and Francis Davis (Sharon Farrell and John Ryan) about to leave for the hospital to have their second child. After an uneventful trip, Lynette is wheeled into the delivery room while Francis is left to wait with the other expectant fathers. Some tension begins to mount when it is revealed that there is some difficulty with the baby's delivery. But just at the moment of birth, the camera cuts from this mother to the father in the waiting room. Suddenly, Francis sees one of the staff rush from out of the delivery room to collapse at his feet... dead! Rushing into the room, Francis is met with a shocking tableau. His missing, barely conscious wife surrounded by the dead and bloodied bodies of the entire staff in attendance, and no sign at all of the newborn baby. The scene is totally unexpected, superbly handled, and exceptionally enhanced by Herrmann's powerful music which often reaches the same frantic heights, fused in that composer's scores for PSYCHO and SISTERS.

Following this terrifying sequence—quite easily the film's best and most shocking—comes the unbelievable explanation which both the characters and the audience

are expected to accept without question as scientific reality. The deaths of the hospital staff were caused by a malnourished baby. Not simply some freak of nature, but a monstrous infant possessing superhuman strength, agility, and speed, as well as razor-sharp claws and fangs. Its birth is explained away with a quickly developed theory. Francis has previously been exposed to some sort of new medicine which has caused the abnormality. All things considered, it is a ridiculous premise on which to base a script, but writer Cohen is a sincerely distressed with the claims of the creature's existence as seen by the writers of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, who so easily explained away their reanimated "zombies." Expanding on previous ideas already seen in ROSEMARY'S BABY (a monstrous hell-spawn) and THE EXORCIST (a child possessing superhuman strength), Cohen has produced a film which attempts to stir us viewers by the sudden and violent actions of an alien creature which should be only one in a million "bleeding hearts."

On reviewer recently dismissed the film calling it "a new type in exploitation," obviously referring to the film's basic idea of a monstrous and malnourished baby. Nevertheless, Cohen is hardly a "bushy" exploitive director. Throughout the film efforts are made to build suspense, create tension and, above all, keep the action moving at such a pace that the audience has little time to reflect on how silly the basic idea is. It would also seem that Cohen has more than a passing interest in the genre, having incorporated many typical horror clichés (down to the "Lewentzow" "but") as well as probably being the individual responsible for the scoring of Hammer's To Die with Honor.

Cohen and his cinematographer Frank Hamilton obviously realized at the outset that, once they were able to create a mood, it could be quickly shattered by any

ridiculous shot of the monstrous baby. Therefore, utilizing a model expertly conceived by Rick Baker (the makeup assistant on THE EXORCIST, see PHANTOM #25), Cohen and Hamilton continually set up intense shots which observed or merely concerned the features of the little cherub. Using a variety of different shots (a baby crawling through high grass, occasionally revealing an eye or its horrible teeth, a glimpse of its claws as it attacks a victim), including extensive low-angle shots (taken from the infant's viewpoint combined with optical distortion to illustrate the baby's inability to perceive our world clearly), Cohen and Hamilton were able to sustain a continued level of suspense which is to mean accomplishment considering what the film would have been in the hands of a Hammer Cohen, Gordon Heist, or Jess Franco.

Although some of the scientists would prefer to capture the infant alive so that they might study it, the terrible witlessness of its movement (Baker captures infelicitous) After escaping from the delivery room (another suspension of reality which, if taken as seriously as extended, is horrifying, the infant supposedly has the strength to propel itself several feet straight up into the air, through a glass windowed skylight onto the roof above), the baby crawls about, kills a young woman who responds to its wailing and, eventually, in an unfortunately humorous sequence which is pulled off remarkably well, "reads" a milk truck, kills the driver, and causes a mixture of blood and milk to splash into the street (perhaps the film's most ludicrous and unneeded scene).

But for every inferior sequence, there are several good ones. The baby is tracked to the elementary school where its parents' older boy attends (the baby—like an animal—has a sense of knowing when and with whom it is feared). For some reason—presumably because it makes

BELOW: Chase breaks out in the operating room as John Ryan tries to aid his helplessly wife who has just given birth to a horrible mutation. Around him lie the slaughtered bodies of the doctors and nurses. **IT'S ALIVE** was produced, written and directed by Larry Cohen. **LEFT:** A close look at the monstrous baby, designed and constructed by one of Hollywood's most talented makeup artists, Rick Baker. **BOTTOM:** Baker puts on the finishing touches.



for an oner scene—the lights fail to work, and the national guardians are left to storkly stalk the infant through the darkened corridor and rooms. The baby is glimpsed crawling along the Kindergarten playthings, only to suddenly rush straight into the face of one of the guardians a few moments later. Seeing it escape, the guardians open up with the most spectacular display of firepower since CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES, one bullet even managing to wound the child.

Finally, the wounded infant is traced to one of the city's large storm drains. France, up to the point determined to see the creature either captured or destroyed, confronts the waiting baby, and begins to weep. It, working it up and seeking to expose to safety with it. Instead, he emerges into a flood of lights and armed men. Offending the father to drop his charge so that it might be quickly killed, instead, the father angrily herds the bumble into the face of a nearby official, causing the infant to fall one last time as it, in turn, is killed by a hail of bullets. Amazingly (or perhaps the most unbelievable scene in an unbelievable film) the father is not at all charged for his own murderous action, but is merely led away to a waiting car where he is informed that a similar birth has only recently occurred elsewhere.

Interviewer among the action, Cohen unassessably attempts to explore and convey the emotional stress and actions of the infant's parents, older brother (who, not having seen the baby before, discovers it in the cellar and immediately warns up to tell their friends, business associates, etc. Michael Arents, Guy Stodolny, and Robert Emhardt) are among the well-known actors involved in these sequences which never fully serve to answer any existing questions, but only serve to raise a battery of new and puzzling ones. And what one might believe that Susan Farrow's character might just conceivably attempt to shatter and smother (but which she does), John Ryan simply does not possess the talent under Cohen's direction to convey the complexity and utter reversal of character which Francis undertakes.

In spite of these plot deficiencies, *IT'S ALIVE!* is an above-average horror film whose pacing and other technical pluses outweigh and compensate for whatever ineptly accompanies it. Because of its merits and its deplorable distribution, it deservedly should be labeled as last year's " sleeper."

—Ronald V. Borst



JAWS A Universal Release, in Panavision and Technicolor 124 minutes. A Zanuck/Brown Production. Produced by Richard D. Zanuck & David Brown. Directed by Steven Spielberg. Screenplay by Peter Benchley & Carl Gottlieb. Based on the novel by Peter Benchley. Director of Photography: Bill Butler. Special Effects by Robert A. Matney. Underwater Photography by Rexford Mett. Music Composed and Conducted by John Williams. Production Designer: Joseph Allen, Jr. Edited by Verma Farber. Line Producer: Ron & Valerie Taylor. Production Executive: William S. Gilmore, Jr. Executive Producer: Tom Joyner. Camera Operator: Mike Chapman. Set Decorator: John M. Dwyer. Technical Advisor: Manfred Zander. Screenplay by John R. Carter & Robert Hoyt.

Cast: Roy Scheider (Oscar Martin Brody), Robert Shaw (Quint), Richard Dreyfuss (Matt Hooper), Lorraine Gary (Ellen Brody), Murray Hamilton (Mayor Larry Vaughan), Carl Gottlieb (Harry Meadows), Jeffrey Kramer (Policeman Hendricks), Sean Schemm (Chrissie), Jonathan Filley (Gladdy), Tim Glickman (Ernsty Victor), Chris Rejzels & Jay Melby (Brody Children), Lee Ferris (Miss Kirtner), Jeffrey Vachtse (Alex Kirtner), Greg Kinnear (Ben Gardner), Robert Nevin (Michael Eismann), Peter Benhley (TV Newscaster)

With the current trend of Hollywood "dinner" films in high gear it shouldn't come as any surprise to find none but the normal quota of individuals slightly uncomfortable as they board an ocean liner or airplane, step out onto the top floor of a skyscraper, or walk about the boulevards of Los Angeles. Films such as AIRPORT 1975, THE TOWERING INFERNO, and EARTHQUAKE have somewhat succeeded in inspiring within many of us that sort of fear of what we may have previously taken for granted. To this ever increasing list of natural and man-made cinematic horrors (effective inasmuch as large we may now add the laws of the earth's surface which comprise our shorelines. For with the release of Universal's *JAWS* we have a film which does for the sea shores of the world what PSYCHO recently did for showers.

JAWS is the most adventuresome horror film of the year—a neatly composed package of pure entertainment which moves at a thunderous pace and affordably emerges as a major improvement over Peter Benchley's bestselling novel, a somewhat triumph which is superb entertainment on a variety of levels.

From top to bottom, the stars of *JAWS*: Roy Scheider as Brody, Robert Shaw as Quint, Richard Dreyfuss as Hooper, and Bruce, the shark. All four provide brilliant characterizations.



That's little need to elaborate on the plot of either novel or film as, by this time, most everyone is familiar with one or both. The film is a faithful adaptation of the book in the general sense: it retains the three major characters—ecologist Matt Hooper, police officer Martin Brody, and professional shark fishermen Quint—as well as the basic storyline of a great white shark menacing the physical, mental, and economic well-being of the inhabitants of Amity Island, a fictitious New England resort community.

However, in terms of specifics, the film radically departs from the novel, and in every instance the change is for the better. Novelist Benchley and Carl Gottlieb concocted (although undoubtedly written) Herman Siskin and John Matus also contributed about and toward they have accomplished a feat that has elevated the novel's heavy padding (most importantly, they have done away with the tedious subplot involving another of the author's affair between Hooper and Brody's wife) while incorporating new sequences and repairing or improving upon old ones. These new or improved scenes include, among others, the dead man's mutilated image bobbing up into the gaping hole in the perpetually sinking boat, the two fishermen who are pulled from the small boat as a result of their attempt to catch the shark with a hook and line tactic, Quint's quiet but spine-chilling rendering of the Indianapolis story, and Brody's son escaping one of the shark's attacks. Benchley et al. have also deleted an entirely new climax, somewhat contrived and unrealistic, granted, but infinitely more satisfying than the novel's lackluster finale. The story with other plot alterations—including the decision to allow Hooper to survive—was welcome surprise, adding greatly to the enjoyment of the film by these familiar with the novel.

Completely absent from the novel but worked into *JAWS* screenplay are also several "buses" or suspense techniques not usually associated with the old thriller produced by Val Lewton. One wonders if these were created by the writers or director for a combination of both. In any case, they appear throughout the film and are extremely successful in bringing forth suspense. The first major "bus" occurs when the dead man's head suddenly floats into Hooper's view as the latter inspects the hull of the half-sunken vessel (providing a nice counter-balance of sorts with another shock scene in the film, that coming when the shark's head appears directly beneath Brody's arm as he leans over the stern). The same suspense technique comes into play during two of the film's major shark attack sequences as well. Preceding the scene in which the little Kirtner boy is killed, the film version has Brody sitting on the beach, nervously anticipating the disaster which he fears might occur at any time, but which he is powerfully powerless to do anything about. Similarly, he glimpses a black object moving towards a solitary float, only to have it momentarily revealed as an old man wearing a black skull cap. Brody sighs, only to see the person develop into another person, a girl's screams. Again, his fears are unwarranted, his outburst caused by a missing boyfriend. Only after these two "buses" have occurred does the shark strike, in a scene which is starting in its suspense and silence. Similarly, two other "buses" precede the sequence in which the giant fish enters the suddenly safe pond area where Brody's eldest son and some other youngsters are talking with their toy craft. The main swimming area is under surveillance; a spotlight near the shore reports seeing something in the vicinity of the area, but when passes it off almost carelessly as simply the result of "glare." When a shark's fin is sighted a few seconds later, there is an immediate mass exodus from the water. Only when the fin is revealed to be a couple of boys playing a reckless prank does the camera cut back to the quiet serenity of the pond area and the real danger.

From the beginning, *JAWS* seemed headed for some problems. Universal wanted to shoot the film as quickly as possible, rushing it into production months ahead of schedule. Casting wasn't completed, the script was unfinished, the effects weren't working out, and when pictures featuring the mechanical shark were filmed, they were initially terribly unimpressive. Thankfully, producer Richard Zanuck selected Steven Spielberg to direct his picture. Spielberg had previously worked with Zanuck on the *THE SUGARLAND EXPRESS*, and it was his compatibility on that film that led Zanuck to engage the twenty-seven year old director for *JAWS*. Spielberg had earlier displayed immense talent as well as a flair for manipulating his audience to the edge of their living room with his superb handling of Richard Matheson's TV movie, *DUEL*. He brings the same competence to *JAWS*, easily cutting from the well written scenes of a sinister nature to scenes which are appropriately humorous, from scenes of massed terror to scenes of quiet intimacy. Writing in the July-August 1976 issue of *Movie* magazine, Robert Rippel related that most of the chance to be seen "snapped by controlled improvisation" the evening before the scene was shot at Spielberg's house. Suggestions on character development came not only from the director but also from the film's stars, Roy Scheider, Robert Shaw and Richard Dreyfuss. And, quite simply, the characterizations and performances are su-

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Marvelous Méliès

AS A PREVIEW OF HIS NEW BOOK, PAUL HAMMOND OFFERS SOME THOUGHTS ON ONE OF FANTASY FILM/DON'S GREAT PIONEERS.

It is well known that the cinema has its origins in optical toys and amusements like Ptolemy's Phenakoscope and Reynold's Phenoscopes and in the photography of movement, especially Mary's chronophotographs. It is less well known that the cinema also has its roots in the theatre of spectacle, in forms like the pantomime and comic-opera, music-hall and conjuring shows. The main features of conjuring and the magic theatre, which began to flourish in the 1850s, was the exploitation of optical trickery to achieve spectacular imagery, with special illusions linked by melodramatic narrative. The appeal of magic was partly to be found in its thrilling mixture of pander, and their careful manipulation, to induce alternate feelings of well-being and disorientation in the spectator. The sensitive use of darkness and light (shot in the literary version of black on black and the drama and clarity of white on black) underlines the extreme and dynamic nature of this kind of entertainment.

The 500 films that Georges Méliès made between 1896 and 1912 include conjuring acts, burlesques, reconstructed events, melodramas, fantastic voyages, stage films, fairy stories, scenes, costume dramas, literary adaptations and advertising films. All these in some sense theatrical and spectacular, his experience as a conjurer, his deft and imaginative and inherited wealth, combined to offer him superior opportunities to develop the trick potential of moving images.

It is curious to note even to see Méliès as an imagery pioneer whose work has little historical and scholarly value. My viewpoint is very different. Méliès has great contemporary significance. Whereas most critics hold his conception of cinema to be obsolete, I would suggest, paradoxically, that it encompasses a viable approach to all film. Méliès thought of his films as assembled fragments, and he compared his role to the compiler of a novel who "is there to link acts that have nothing to do with each other."¹ The spectacular nature of cinematic imagery within a secondary narrative is central to Méliès' aesthetic. His films make the viewer aware of the velocity of the heightened, autonomous world. The independence of the isolated image and its ability to shock and arouse has implications for any critical conception of the cinema.

In studying Méliès' films, we tend to read them as solitary images, or rather as pairs of images, for it is particularly intriguing to scrutinize the adjacent frames that depict a trick transformation. These adjacent images are the focal points of his work. This kind of intimate contact makes Stan Brakhage's words most apposite: "I took my first unces of the individual frame life of a film from Méliès."²

Of the 500 films Méliès made, less than 90 have survived. Some of the lost films were as simple images only, as stills or sketches. We must treat these images as the meaningful residue of the lost work. His use of painted sets during shooting and the hand-colouring of individual frames in the laboratory indicate that Méliès used almost wholly graphic means to conceptualize his work. His films have their expression and reference as much in painting, illustration and caricature, as static images and set pieces as in narrative and plot. And the situation of the autonomous image touches upon the issue of filmic memory and discourse, the very we remember

films and the way we talk about them.

So, far from being a quiet precursor, Méliès can teach us. If we pay him enough attention, how to look at films. From him we can learn to consider the cinema as a medium animated by marvelous moments owing little allegiance to the linear narrative structure that hold them together. From Méliès we can elucidate a structure of the cinema that consists of narrative and aesthetic images identified from their obligations to good sense. These images might be thought of as "shots" in a purely neutral film of which we are each, at best, the director or, at worst, the contemporary. The intention must be to create an ever more conscious web of evidence "to be lived directly."³ While an image exists to be interpreted it also exists to be experienced for itself, in an occult sort of way. Although never scornful of theorizing, it is the primacy of the image that we must hold dear. Méliès reveals us by verifying, even radicalizing, that conception. Méliès is the representative word to describe Méliès' films. "The marvelous," said André Breton, "has never been better defined than as being in complete contrast to the fantastic."⁴ This antithesis is worth considering, for it sheds light on the whole structure and development of the fantasy film, a genre that has its first master in Méliès.

The marvelous (in non-scientific) indicates an harmonious, parallel world, whereas the fantastic (in the scientific) refers to the shock experienced when abnormal, extraneous forces emerge to disrupt the equilibrium of normal, everyday reality. The imaginary erupts into the real and thereby puts reality on trial. The marvelous presents us with the impossible happening in a world where possibility is the rule, while the fantastic presents us with the impossible happening in a world where impossibility is outlawed. The fantastic emerged in the eighteenth century because a scientific conception of the world began to predominate: the more the universe was rationalized the greater heights the fantastic imagination reached. The marvelous, on the other hand, existed long before the period; indeed, it informs any number of myths. That the marvelous flourished in the early cinema, which was, for the first ten years or so, an irrational, pre-scientific (that is to say almost "realist") enterprise, we have Méliès' films to attest. According to Gérard Lippé, "it was the arrival of sound that largely laid the marvelous to rest since the noise reestablished the audio-visual duality of everyday life, thereby encouraging a stronger lyrical strain to emerge. The more "real" the depiction of reality is the more profound its subversion by the imaginary becomes. It is logical to assume, then, that the silent cinema's very limitations, the fact that it was silent, obliged it to turn to the marvelous in the early days."

Aspects of conjuring and magic, it was the Englishman, John Nevill Maskelyne, rather than the Frenchman, J.E. Robert Houdin (whose theatre Méliès bought in 1888 and ran until its demolition in 1923), who influenced Georges Méliès. The generation separating the French and English magicians had seen Maskelyne develop the use of dramatic narratives to connect and enhance the tricks performed personally by Robert-Maskelyne. J.N. Maskelyne's son, Nevill, wrote:

Since the principles of magical procedure are inadequate to provide the conditions requisite for dramatic effect, we are bound to fall back on the principles of drama for the main outlines of our presentation.

The magical items are, as it were, beads held together and supported by the thread of dramatic interest. Thus, considered, the beads form a chain of harmonious proportions.⁵

Méliès had visited Maskelyne's theatre, the Egyptian Hall, during a year's stay in London, in 1884. The impressions and ideas he gained there were to influence the thirty or so "theatrical compositions" he invented between 1896 and 1907 and which is perhaps more important, were to influence his own conception of cinema. In filmmaking, as in his stage productions, Méliès preferred to invent details first of all. He liked to include a few tricks, then one principal dramatic effect, and a final apothecary. "You could say that the scenario is in this case simply a thread intended to link the 'tricks', in themselves without much relation to each other. I mean to say that the scenario has no more than a secondary importance in the genre of composition."⁶ One is reminded of Nevill Maskelyne's "beads".

Méliès was already familiar with trick photography by the time the Cinématographe came along. He simply applied it to filmmaking, using his knowledge of the optical device used in stage-production to further good effect. The movie cameras he employed meant his scenes had to be an "objective" one; it had to remain as still and serene as a spectator in an auditorium. His films, therefore, are essentially photographed pantomimes. For Méliès the movie camera was a mechanism that allowed his tricks and tableaux to be seen in numerous theatres at once. It was a form of printing, but he did not consider it to be the same. Indeed he prepared a number of purely cinematic tricks within the theatrical context he preferred. Méliès used the medium of film in a graceful way, to enable himself to become a better conjurer.

What is considered by many critics to be Méliès' weakness—namely his static, objective camera and his theatrical aesthetic—is, on the contrary, his great strength. His relentless style, unbroken by montage but enlivened by cinematic tricks, is admirably effective in inducing a condition of absent and open-mindedness, of reverie, propitious for the reception of his poetic images. His theatrical imagery operates in the exhilarating area where spectators find their resolution, destruction giving way to restitution, melancholia to benevolence, and fragmentation to continuity. This we quite rightly call the marvelous.

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LEFT: The cinema has its roots in the theatre of spectacle. Here, Legris is visited by ghosts on stage as Méliès' theatre in 1907. RIGHT: A 26666 picture in THE ASTONISHING FRAMES (1904) with Méliès as the Count de Cagliostro.



Phantom of the Paradise

A new type of horror film.

Reviewed by
Bill Warren.



PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE is one of the very few horror movies which is an instant classic, a new standard. The only horror films made in my lifetime that have had that stature are THE INNOCENTS, ROSEMARY'S BABY, PSYCHO, and, on a lower level, HORROR OF ORACULA. Almost everyone I know who has seen PHANTOM, regardless of other differences of opinion and taste, has thought it a fine film. The word most often used is "fantastic"; so often that it gets a little spooky. In their revamped ad campaign, Fox is referring to the film as "Phantastic."

A rock 'n' roll version of PHANTOM OF THE OPERA seemed inevitable. The two genres of rock and horror kept brushing against each other—glutted rock songs turned up in such AIP movies as BLOOD OF DRACULA and I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF. Several films in the 1960s (and later) were advertised as the "first rock-horror movie," but were never any good as either rock or horror. Of all the standard horror plots, PHANTOM OF THE OPERA is the most applicable to rock. The image that springs to mind is that of a gutter-slumping, skull-faced spook, all too trim and true.

I'm grateful that it was Brian de Palma and Edward Pressman who finally got the project completed, for the movie is unique. In his previous film, SISTERS, de Palma was deliberately making a Hitchcock picture, but in PHANTOM, de Palma doesn't seem to be making any sort of film but his own. As might be expected from any picture made by a film buff, there are references in PHANTOM to other movies, but the film is still a unit; these references never intrude on the picture, they only add resonances which improve the movie for film buffs and don't harm it for others.

The Plot: Swan (Paul Williams), genius of rock promotion, a super Phil Spector, is searching for a new sound to open his rock palace, the Paradise: a sound beyond teenage rock and glitter rock. He finds it in the rock cantata of "Faust" written by earnest, naive young composer Winslow Leach (William Finley). Swan sends his assistant Philbin (George Memmoli) to get the cantata from Winslow, which he does by means of various promises and the magic name of Swan. Winslow later discovers his work has been usurped and tries in vain to get to Swan. Eventually Winslow lands in jail through Swan's machinations. When he escapes, he is burned and disfigured in a record factory and shent while fleeing, he creeps into Swan's about-to-open rock palace and becomes the Phantom of the Paradise.

After some preliminary attempts at destruction, Winslow meets Swan and they enter into an uneasy partnership, with Winslow hoping to get his music performed correctly, and Swan still planning to get his own way.

Winslow induces Swan to cast Phoenix (Jessica Harper), a young singer he's fond of, as the female lead, but Swan makes further changes unknown to Winslow, such as using a glitter-rock singer, Beef (Gerrit Graham) and Swan's variously-named rock group, The Juicy Fruits/Beach Bums/Undeads (Harold Oblong, Archie Hahn, Jeffrey Comaner).

The Phantom discovers that Swan has sold his soul to the Devil, who here looks like Swan, and that Swan must watch a videotape of the transaction every day. And Winslow discovers the contract he signed was also diabolical. There are more surprises before the end.

PHANTOM is an exciting, intriguing film—there is something going on on that screen, in that movie. Some very nice, vivid, and nasty ideas that are excellent but somewhat misnamed YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN. I think PHANTOM may prove to be the most influential horror movie in years (I think it is the most important), because it is the first horror film to use old material in legitimately new ways, combining the excitement of rock with the thrills of

horror movies (plus lots of comedy). Before going further, the term "horror movie" as I use it here needs defining. By it, I mean a film using the same plot devices and storylines that were once used in an effort to frighten, but which are not necessarily used that way. The "classic horror movie" plots, if you will, both YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN and PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE are, therefore, horror movies as I use the term.

Rock has been enjoyed by young people since Bill Haley and the Comets. The horror film is an even older form of entertainment. There had to be a reason why youngsters continued to go to horror movie after horror movie long after they were aware that most of them were crud. (That they went partially because the films were awful begs the question.) The same is true of rock—for every giant there are a dozen dwarfs, yet the kids keep listening. There was something reaching these people, something that may have actually been in common between horror films and rock music.

I think it was a challenging vitality. Fantastic horror movies have the excitement of the unknown, something just not available in the real world for most of us, or in other movies. Even the worst of them makes the viewer strain his imagination a little more than non-fantastic films of the same level of endeavor. Rock music carries within its rhythms an excitement lacking in other youth-oriented music.

There have been other attempts to ally the genres. AIP used to include rock songs in all their teenage exploitation films, horror and otherwise; the Beach Party films often had a smidgen of the macabre. But most other horror films with rock music have failed because that's all they are—horror films in old styles with rock music forced into them. This includes HORROR OF PARTY BEACH, INCREDIBLY STRANGE CREATURES, and Ringo Starr's SON OF ORACULA. In them, no concessions are made to the music, no attempt is made to create a gestalt, it's as if rock and horror were two separate decks of cards shuffled together. Until PHANTOM, no effort was made to find a subject which would readily join the two genres together—and, more importantly, an approach allying rock and horror.

Here the excitement of rock music is matched with the interest of a reasonably good horror movie story (having been used often before), and the style of the picture is the filmic equivalent of rock—dazzling, fast-paced and colorful. (The last reel, in fact, is so thrillingly edited and scored that the excitement is engendered in the spectator somewhere in the nonthinking part of the mind, and you respond the way you do to a spectacularly well-done rock number, with your body and not your intellect.)

But the importance to future horror movies is not just that rock music is used, it's that de Palma has found a legitimately new approach to handling horror in films. Even the best and/or highest-budgeted horror films of recent years have been rigidly traditional in basic structure and approach. Such films as ROSEMARY'S BABY, THE OTHER and THE EXORCIST haven't broken any new ground in overall treatment or content—their virtues have been that of the Well Made Thing, their innovations have been minor turns of plot or degree of violence. They are all old horror stories or themes done in more-or-less old-fashioned styles with larger budgets and somewhat more skill.

These films, despite claims by some horror movie fans to the contrary, have done anything new; they've just done the same old thing better or to a greater extent.

ROSEMARY'S BABY and THE EXORCIST (respectively, a film I like and one I do not) are the true heirs to Hammer Films. THE EXORCIST could not have existed without THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN and HORROR OF



Protagonist actor William Finley as Winslow Leach, the PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE. Finley, also excellent in De Palma's SISTERS, enjoys horror films and hopes to continue to do them.

DRACULA; Hammer had changed the atmosphere.

BUT PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE is something altogether new—its look is new to horror movies. There are none of the richly detailed, carefully planned interiors of Hammer and its heirs, no leaning on any of the trappings of German Expressionism. (Most horror films since 1967 have been unequal combinations of Hammer's quasi-realism and old-style horror movies' use of Expressionism.)

And this is where the true influence of PHANTOM will lie. There'll be a few other rock-horror movies from copyleft producers and directors who don't know what's really good about PHANTOM, but a step has been made. I'm not claiming that horror movies need to be allied with rock all the time—I think that what PHANTOM indicates is that a director need no longer be tied to well-used approaches to horror stories.

Some horror movie buffs have thought THE EXORCIST should be the new

model for horror movies to follow, but since it was old—that except in how far it went, the scene seems unlikely. And some of the same buffs have not seen that the true model should be PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE. What I hope will happen is that the clever, interesting young directors of today will see that horror classics can be made in whatever mode seems appropriate. Hammer realism or Expressionism are not the only modes to follow in horror. It's interesting, for instance, to see FRANKENSTEIN made in a humanistic mode, somewhat Frank Capra-ish. PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE could be the liberator of the horror genre.

PHANTOM is funny, exciting, stunningly designed, and highly stylized. Production Designer Jack Fisk has done an excellent job. There are blood-red stairwells, Swan's incredible electronic lair, mirrors everywhere, Swan's evil mansion. (The Paradise is an old Texan movie theater, the Mayette.) The color is largely primaries, with much red and gold, it's vivid and gleamy and imaginatively used throughout. The costumes worn by Swan and the Phantom are varied and nicely characteristic of the parts. Phantom seems to have a different cape for each mood.

Larry Pizer's photography, heavy on wide-angle lenses and strong lighting, is effective and vivid. There's little use of darkness for mood; it's brightly lit throughout, and the resulting mood is unlike that of any other horror movie. Pizer emphasizes the eerie appearance of William Finley as the Phantom in all his steel-toothed, bird-like glory. (Pizer also photographed MORGAN and was co-photographer on ISAORA.)

The rich score is by Paul Williams, and displays a wide knowledge of rock idiom; there's a surfing song, 50s-type rock, glitter rock, and a complete rock outburst which becomes an opera. The album, released by A&M records, is good, but some viewers may regret the resistance to their treatment in the film because of the lack of crowd noises. Williams does the score that Finley appears to sing in the film after he is Phantomized, but Williams' character has none of his own. Gerrit Graham doesn't do his own singing, either; his number is handled by the capable Ray Kennedy. Finley sings the "Faust" number at the beginning and, though he isn't a professional singer, his abilities as an actor sell the number; Winslow seems totally absorbed in his song, carried away with his own music. The score is ambitious and even witty. One reason Williams was cast in the film was because he feels that he and much of his previous music were treated something like Swan treats Winslow and his music. In fact, the surfing song "Upholstery," is a comical debasement of the film's main song, "Faust."

Paul Williams, actor, is excellent as Swan. His only other adult role in films that I know of was as the lead orangutan in BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES. While, in his early twenties, he played children in THE LOVED ONE and THE CHASE, he hasn't been active as an actor since. Originally he was to have played the title role in PHANTOM, but for good reason instead played the part intended for Bill Finley. The casting switch is a bright idea; Swan is like a powerful child, and Williams looks like a corrupt elf, eternally amazed by torment. He is delightful, a return of the Villain You Love to Hate. His diminutive stature is the source of several jokes in the film (he downsies in his office building and home are too short for anyone but him to walk through upright), and the idea of this tiny man embodying so much power, natural and supernatural, is as much a part of the movie as the rock score. His strange, soft voice is extremely well suited to his lines ("Breakfast!") and he reads them very well. He looks like a plotter and he is superb.

Though a villain, Swan occasionally shows signs of being troubled by the power he has over Winslow and, later, Phoebe. Therefore, he is not a totally black-hearted antagonist, and this adds a little dimension to the character. (Swan's romanticism—and Winslow's—is quite in keeping with the long tradition of horror movies.) His decision late in the film to kill one of the main characters seems to be prompted by his growing affection for the other, and Swan must repudiate this weakness ("I loathe perfection in anyone but myself," he says. He is hurtily sympathetic.

William Finley is also excellent, as he was in SISTERS where he played the part of Margot Kidder's doctor/husband. But here he looks so completely different that it's a little surprising it's the same actor. Here he seems 20 years younger than in the other film, and is unquestionably American (just as he was undoubtedly Canadian in SISTERS). Finley likes horror movies and wants to continue to do them. I can only hope he does. Despite some false starts (Quarry, Marshall, Fido) no new major horror star has been developed since Cushing, Lee, and Price. The genre demands stars and Finley looks promising. He is a problem actor, which is useful in horror parts. His playing is loose but disciplined, and he uses his gawky appearance well; there's a wide range of possible roles in horror films for this type of actor.

It would have been easy for Finley to let the costume and makeup (such as it all work for him, and to simply stop acting once he becomes the Phantom. But he's far too professional for that. He makes the Phantom a character of insane menace and real tragedy. Because of his look, Finley must rely on his gangling body to carry the burden of the role, and he does this with great finesse. Finley is believable in one of the most outlandish parts ever written; he is as good as Williams and the film belongs equally to both of them.

The writing of Winslow's character has a glitch in an early pre-Phantom scene. Winslow angrily attacks Philbin. After calming down, he admits he has a temper, which I suppose is intended to partly explain his turning Phantom later, but it's a bad idea which is desperately overdone by the audience. There's plenty of reasons for Winslow to go mad without this bit.

When he does go off the deep end, it's quite a show. Winslow is something of a dope, and is very appealing. The scene in which he goes crazy in the prison toy factory is both funny and frightening. This placed affable guy becomes a detached, dangerous psychotic before our eyes. Finley makes the scene a knockout.

George Memmola as Swan's right-hand-man, Philbin, is one of the best sidekick villains of recent years. He is a 50s greater than, totally depraved and serenely unconscious of this. His opening monologue is well written and very well-delivered. ("She was more than a piece to me; she was the light of my life.")

Jessica Harper plays Phoenix, the Mary Philbin part, and it's good in a limited role. As early as her first scene, she suggests the fame-hunger which is her eventual downfall. Her audition number is one of the two musical highlights of the film—the entertaining and her funny dance at the finish of the song is very sexy in a relaxed, off-hand way. Pauline Kael, in her interesting review of the film, rightly points out that "Old Souls," Phoenix's song following the electrifying "Like a Last" number, just isn't strong enough for the reaction the audience exhibits. But the scene is necessary to propel the plot, and so it must stay. I'm not sure what could have been done—perhaps the audition song could have been switched with "Old Souls"—but the content of the earlier number requires its existing placement.

The exposition is alarmingly fast at times, as when Winslow escapes from prison. What might take other directors 5 minutes to accomplish, de Palma whizzes through in 45 seconds. Pauline Kael says that de Palma shows little interest in straight plot scenes, as when Winslow and Phoenix first meet. She may be right, but de Palma has so much fun with everything else that it really doesn't matter in this film. And if he continues to choose his material as cannily as he did this time, it will never happen. But if he follows through with some of his announced plans, he will have to learn to deal with necessary but, to him, uninteresting material.

There are gaps in the continuity in places. Whenever Swan enters his secret videotape room, he is shown in the room in the same costume he wore the first time, regardless of what he was wearing when he entered. And, at the end, when Winslow destroys all the contract tapes, something should happen to Phoenix, because the apparently dead Swan her voice, and because the effect on other contractors is devastating, but she seems to be totally unaffected by the destruction of her tape.

Some scenes lack credibility in character motivation, largely because de Palma is more interested in pace and approach than in characterization. For example, Winslow's love for Phoenix has no real basis beyond his liking her voice. This is unfortunate, but not a major drawback. PHANTOM is a melodrama, and in such films, characterization doesn't need to be any more detailed than necessary to explain the broad actions of the dramatic personae. If the characterization were more detailed or consistent, the film wouldn't necessarily be better.

The movie is loaded with references to other movies (and to TV: Rod Serling narrates the opening). Besides the obvious PHANTOM OF THE OPERA resemblances, there are scenes inspired by TOUCH OF EVIL, THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE, THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY, PSYCHO, THE CABINET OF DR. CALIGARI, THE GODFATHER, CASK OF AMONTILLADO, FRANKENSTEIN, and probably others as well. That there may be others indicates the references are anything but intrusive. The ending is a dizzying kaleidoscope quite unlike anything else I've seen, save only the climax of LES ENFANTS DU PARADIS, no less.

Bird imagery turns up frequently in the movie. The Phantom wears the mask of an owl, there are Swan's and Phoenix's names, the name of Swan's recording company is "Death Records" and a dead bird is the symbol. Various female characters wear feathers: one of Swan's vests is covered with birds. Birds are traditionally used either as representatives of Sex or Death. Sex is not at all important in the film, with the only relationships in the form of sexless devotion and possession. If de Palma is following classic imagery, then it would seem that here birds represent death. But de Palma may be ignoring the classical uses of birds and simply be using them for flavor and as a unifying factor. He's probably just having fun.

The structure of PHANTOM is exhilarating, a roller-coaster ride. Every time it looks as though the story has to end here, the picture turns a corner you didn't know was coming. Kael says that although you might guess at the content of the next scene, the pacing will throw you in unexpected ways. But the content is surprising time after time, and the first audience I saw it with, which loved it, gasped with surprise and cheered the more startling plot developments.

The satirical elements of the film dealing with the rock music industry are largely incidental, but are apparently well-observed and accurate—the hoodlum bachelors, powerful contracts, drugs, song thievery, etc. The satire is real and vicious, but it isn't what the film is really up to, which is entertainment. One nice element of satire is that when Swan electronically restores Winslow's ruined singing voice, the voice that emerges from all the tapes and filters and speakers is that of Swan.

The picture isn't just a rock version of Gaston Leroux's novel, The Phantom of the Opera, but seems to be suggested by the Hammer Films version (1952, Terence Fisher, with Herbert Lom). Several elements, including the large role played by the manager of the theater, the Phantom's pre-Phantom effort to destroy his work, and his subsequent disappearance into a river are in the Hammer version and this one. Because of this, a lawsuit was momentarily impending between Fox and Universal (distributors of the Hammer Film and owners, apparently, of the film rights to PHANTOM OF THE OPERA) prior to the release of PHANTOM. Fortunately it was settled out of court, Universal reportedly received \$250,000 and a percentage.

Furthermore, the title was changed from simply PHANTOM to PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE because the newspaper syndicate distributing Lee Falk's "Phantom" comic strip threatened lawsuit themselves. The change saved any problems there, but otherwise the more blatant title is not an improvement. The best title was the earliest, PHANTOM OF THE FILLMORE, but Bill Graham, owner of the "Fillmore" name, refused its use. Originally Swan's company was "Swan Song Enterprises" (which explains "Death Records"), but a company which already has "Swan Song" as the name of one of its subsidiaries objected, and painstaking matters were inserted to change the name of the company to that of what was originally to be only Swan's subsidiary, "Death Records." For those who saw the earlier prints, this has the effect of reducing Swan's influence in the business world from a multi-media tyrant to the owner of a mere record company.

The film was produced by Edward R. Pressman, usually partnered with

director Paul Williams (not the singer/actor appearing in PHANTOM). PHANTOM is the second of de Palma's films he has produced, the first being SISTERS. Among Pressman's other credits are OUT OF IT, THE REVOLUTIONARY, DEALING, OR THE BERKELEY TO BOSTON FORTY BRICK, LOST-BAG BLUES, and BADLANDS (which was named the best film of 1974 by Sight and Sound). He is a man of integrity and imagination, and he knows a good property when he sees it. He bought the rights to PHANTOM from Ray Stark, and chose de Palma to write and direct.

I can only hope that de Palma plans to make more horror movies. SISTERS was good. PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE is better. His next scheduled film, to star Genevieve Bujold and called DEJA VU, sounds unfortunately rather like a reworking of VERTIGO. But after that he's supposed to do THE DEMOLISHED MAN for Fox, from Alfred Bester's excellent novel.

Furthermore, de Palma reportedly hopes to make a sequel to PHANTOM in which Swan would return as a guru "to be the Maharaj." Williams again would be perfect for this, but it might be basting a dead horse at the time, and to continue the Swan character might be an error.

But whatever the outcome of his future projects, de Palma has established himself as a major director of the fantastic with PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE.

PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE, A 20th Century Fox release, 1674, 91 minutes. Color by Movieline. Produced by Edward R. Pressman. Directed and written by Brian De Palma. Executive Producer: Gustave Berner. Director of Photography: Larry Foner. Music produced by Paul Williams. Additional Scoring Composed and Conducted by George Alenzer. Tapes, Costume Designer: Rosanna Norton. Makeup by Roll Miller. Edited by Paul Hirsch. Sound by James Tamboreau. Property Master: Erik Nelson.

Cast: Paul Williams (Swan), William Fawcett (Winslow), Jessica Harper (Phoenix), George Memmola (Philbin), Gerrit Graham (Berli), Jeffrey Conaway (Lead, The Jockey Fraternity), Archie Hahn (Lead, The Beach Bunnies), Harold Olmstead (Lead, The Underdog).

The Phantomday Panel

Late in February of 1975, a special meeting was held in the clubhouse of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. Deported by Bob Greenberg, Bill Warren and William Fawcett, the meeting honored PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE and was attended by Fawcett and other cast and crew members. Tom Ogbey recorded the event, and what follows are some excerpts of the comments made by Fawcett (WFL), Warren (WRN), Gerrit Graham (GGR) and Bill Warren (BWR).

BELOW: The final, ultimate entertainment at the Paradise: a coast-to-coast televised assassination. William Shepard photographed this sequence. **BOTTOM:** Swan convinces Winslow to sign his diabolical contract.



who portrayed Beef, William Shepard (WS) who choreographed the wedding number and traveling around to Windsor at the cinema, Angus Hulse (AH) who was one of the Juicy Fruits, and George Monro (GM) who played Phyllis.

EW: Were there any arguments that were left out of the picture?

WF: Any arguments? Yeah, there were, and I've got to think of what they were.

GG: There used to be a shot of Bill coming right up out of the record press into the camera with his face painted and his eyeball shining down his cheek.

AH: There was a scene where he was shot by the guard in the record factory, and that was cut.

EW: I had the impression there were more scenes in the Swamp involving drugs and Phoenix.

WF: There was a long scene in a car, where they're driving through the crowd outside the Paradise. They're inside the car, talking about drugs. Well, you know, George, you were in there. It was long, right?

GM: Yeah, they just added for time. It was Paul, me, and Jessica.

WF: What was the shooting schedule on the picture?

WF: It was eight weeks, went to ten. Started at six.

EW: I find somewhere that the record press you were using was a real one.

WF: It wasn't a record press. It was a machine at the Pressmen factory. I nearly died at the Pressmen factory, for the Pressman-Williams films, in their fucking toy machine.

EW: Did they do that just, just to see it really?

WF: As a matter of fact, it was the last shot in the picture. It was always scheduled last. I kept asking why it was always scheduled last. And I found out. It's really an extension static machine, for making tanks or something, plastic something, for Pressmen.

EW: What kept it from closing?

WF: His head!

AH: They had things called shocks, which are very thick steel bars. On one take the shocks broke, and the guys were shocked, and the machine went limp (indicating with his hands that as the guys drop at the machine it almost slammed shut).

EW: Is that right? In the person sequence, your head is short, almost as if you'd been attacked by the shocks, and a week later it's gone out, almost as if you'd been in a car crash.

WF: The magic of movie pictures. It was a wog, and it's not a week later, theoretically more time had passed.

EW: Why was it cut?

WF: To make me look as though I had spent some time in prison. Oh, that's another thing. There was a whole scene in prison which they cut before they even started.

EW: Did we have any more scenes in the theater than the one in the sequence?

WF: Uh-huh. No. The only shot was the one on the assembly line, to establish the existence of the silver teeth. Brian likes to have references to teeth in all his films. To Brian the weakest part of a person is his teeth.

EW: The silver teeth I understand. The black lips inside me.

WF: The black lips were in to set off the silver teeth.

EW: Who designed the look of the Phantom?

WF: A lot of people. I'd say me, primarily, and John Chambers, and a sculptor who worked on the thing whose name I don't know. But it would be Chambers, Norman Norton who composed the costumes, and Brian. And the late Earl Miller, the makeup man.

EW: How long did the makeup take to put on?

WF: Four hours. It was only put on on ten times, and it cost a fortune.

EW: Bill, did he have a Death Records label on the imprint on your face?

WF: Yeah, it did. It's here, if you stop a frame you can see the label. It looks like a hole in his face. Don't you want to ask anybody else some questions? I'm a little embarrassed.

EW: Gert, did it challenge your ability as an actor to portray—uh—him?

WF: I did it in something of a vacuum, because it was not what I thought I was going to be doing in the film at all. Originally, the band, the Juicy Fruits, was going to be the Sha-Na-Na. In toto, and Beef was going to be one of the members of the Sha-Na-Na. Then they couldn't decide between themselves who was going to play Beef. "Joe, I call in this band eight years, I gotta have some lines." And so they were owned, I got a call from Brian. "Well, Sha-Na-Na dropped out, so we want you to be Beef." So I naturally assumed it was going to be 500 more weekends. I came out to L.A. from New York, and we read together. George, Paul, I, and Brian, through the wall, and I was given this record (500 they record). Brian said "Hey, no, Gert, what are you doing? Try a little harder." So, as a joke, I said "Like this?" (Beef's voice) "That's it!" he said. The rest is history.

EW: Yeah, you're in pictures before for Brian, right?

GG: Yeah, GREETING IN HIGH MIND. Way back when.

EW: Gert, also did he make the third attempt at GENESIS II.

WF: Yeah. Remember that? Gert's here with it to watch it. It was taken over by a guy named Matt Green, who did THE HELLSTROM CHRONICLE.

EW: He co-wrote THE WILD BUNCH.

GG: Yeah, there you go. And he tried to punch it out. The problems were legion. They shot two one-hour episodes back-to-back to use as the pilot.

EW: Bill Friday, I understand that originally you were to play Peter, and Paul Williams was to play Winston.

WF: It's even weirder than that. Brian worked on a script, and that was quite a while back, it was rejected. And Brian and a collaborator worked on a version of the script and that was accepted. Originally I was going to play the Phantom, but that was a long time ago. Then Williams came in, and Paul liked it, liked the whole idea, liked what it was going to do for him. In what he thought it was going to do for him and it did do it for him. In any case, that's got knocked out of the part with a broken heart, and I was going to play Beef. (Much laughter)

EW: (Beef's voice) Oh, really?

WF: Yeah, but I wouldn't have done it half as good as you. So I was going to do that, and Paul decided it would be weird for the little part to be around in a cape and a mask. This was also two weeks later, and I got the call, and my heart went pitter-pat. Brian said "You're a Paul's going to play Beef."

GG: I spent a lot of time talking to Brian on the phone, and at one point he said, "Well, look, this is it. You're gonna play Swan. Biggest role of your career." And Peter Boyle was going to play Beef.

EW: (To Bill Friday) You're shooting a TV movie, a Humphrey Bogart kind of thing?

WF: Yeah. I called DEJA-VU HOUSE. DICK Truitt (LAST MIGHT BEFORE MORNING) It's for TV, straight forward, all period, done with the CHINATOWN art directors. Ed Lauter's playing Bogie.

EW: Gert, do you ever hear anything on PHANTOM?

GG: Yeah, I'm seeing her in the shower, and in the corridor perched around Swan's desk, in my old room.

EW: But on stage it's Ray Kean, Beach Bunk, and the Undeeds, obviously everybody got a suit at being less young. How did you decide who was going to sing which songs?

AH: It was the culmination of a big fight in the parking lot, and I won. Absolutely, it was kind of absurd. We read the thing, and each guy picked out what he thought he would like to do. We all picked something different.

EW: That greater approach—was it your idea to do it as a Puerto Rican?

AH: No, that was Paul's.

EW: Who choreographed that part?

AH: I mean Harold Glibo—G. But the lead singer in each piece really choreographed his own movements.

EW: Why does the Phantom change his cape from time to time?

WF: They made this cape that was impossible to work in. It was just a bad silver cape. It reflected all sorts of light, it was just terribly designed and was rotten and I hated it. The cape that I liked a lot got doo-doo or something on it, and we switched back and forth from that.

EW: Sometimes it seems it's a red velvet cape with a red satin lining, and sometimes a red satin cape with a red velvet lining.

WF: There were about four different capes, but they get dirty. We figured if anybody noticed, their reaction would be "who cares?"

EW: I thought the reaction at the first was simply tickled on to explain their story after the film had been finished, to save time.

WF: No, it was always planned to have narration at the first of the film. Originally, it was going to be a long, long sequence, written by Jay Cooks, which was going to be the history of Swan as a CITIZEN KANE, but they figured it would just slow down the film and wouldn't add much.

GG: There was a lot that things where they're coming into the Paradise, Swan and Phoenix, and that woman name you say "Swan? Swan? Don't you remember I'm Betty Lou?" With a picture of the two of them 20 years previous. That originally had been a much longer scene, and there had been some kind of complication between Swan and Betty Lou and that had been at the very top of the film. In the club where the Juicy Fruits were doing their little thing, I don't know what the reason was, but they cut it out and stuck it in later.

EW: (To Gert) Graham? Can you tell us something about the shower sequence?

GG: Yeah, it was a set which they built which had three movable walls—one was the wall in which the door was set, one was the wall out of which the shower head was extended normally, and 50 degrees around from that. It was a working shower, they pumped the water around.

EW: It was a working shower without a working door.

GG: It sort of pooled around your feet. They built the set in a room that was maybe three or four times the size of that one. They built it right in the corner of the room, and they put plastic on the floor. They had no way of draining the water, and they had to pump it out. It started out as a hot hot shower. When it got like warm, I figured "Well, that's show biz." It was right from then to freezing cold. I had a bit of—well, my relations with the crew at the time were not great. They were the last day they played on me.

EW: How many times were you in the face with the plunger?

GG: Six or seven.

EW: Was it an unused plunger?

GG: I've got the very plunger at home. The crew gave it to me.

EW: Tell me, where they stuck it, with a nibbler.

WF: Gold plated.

EW: Gert, I don't know if you read the review in Rolling Stone a few weeks ago. Apparently there was a controversy over whether that scene was to be done entirely with the knife or if the plunger was to be employed. Paul Williams wanted to do the whole scene with a knife. Do Pauls want to use the plunger.

GG: I don't know. I think I saw the hired hand.

EW: It was my idea to combine both of them. I was like the policeman on duty.

EW: I'd like to ask a question about the choreography of the wedding and death sequence at the end. How was it worked out, on paper?

WF: No, it was something worked out at the time. Also, my relations with the crew were as intense as Bill. (Beef's) We got a few people I had known and worked with before to work as extras in the film. I had two extra in the first scene. I had a few extras in the wedding and the anthems. The anthems was the freaks in the audience who wanted to rush the stage, and the chorus were the dancers. We got most of the dancers from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, the dance department, and we got some of the actors there too. Anyway, we worked in a studio for four nights, just doing costumes and various things to work the actors and the two groups. They just didn't assemble. We set up a few gowns and began to work out, gradually they began working together. When we finally arrived on the set and the girls tried on the costumes, they were gorgeous. They didn't fit. The idea was they were supposed to be crowd women, with crow hats and three leg crow wings and the feather ribbons and a little G-string. It really looked obscene, like that obscene guitar hairs were growing out of their crotches. The bikinis were so made that they didn't give them any behind, just cut their asses in half and left two big cheeks on either side. The girls were very upset, the crew was angry at them, they began working together. When we finally arrived and found myself in the dubious position of trying to solve the problems, I went up to one young young lady who was sitting over there, sniffling, with a blanket wrapped around her. (In Texas accent) "I can't do it. My ass is shown." So we got the little fish pants and sort of finished out the situation. On the last day when we shot that wedding scene it took sixteen hours. It was an amazing long time.

EW: Is it true it just required two takes?

WF: Yeah.

EW: Gert, where does the first imagery fit in?

WF: It started out with the names "Phantom" and "Swan" and Brian said "Well, that's terrible." And the interview designer said "Yeah, I want to make everything look like a bird." And that's just how it went. You see, Brian is very good at making up contained universes. When he can afford to, that is, and that was the first time he's really been able to afford to make a whole universe out of that.

EW: Has he got other stuff going on now? I understand U2/JA VU will start soon.

WF: DEJA-VU (implied DOUBLE RANSOM) has just started in Rome and Florence.

GG: And here are all of us, sitting here in North Hollywood.

EW: The latest issue of Foliovision Newsletter has an interview with de Palma and a very short article about the film.

WF: The latest issue of Famous Monsters has a review by some strange person. PHANTOM won first prize at a fantastic film festival in Avignon, France, and so they're going to try to do it in Paris, because that's apparently a very prestigious organization. Fox hasn't done a good job as far as promoting it goes.

EW: Apparently they didn't know what to do. First they had the psychedelic looking ad, which gives sort of the wrong feel.

WF: After you see the film it makes sense, but not before. It was told by Paul that it's the biggest film in Cinema. It's weird about Brian's film, because SISTERS had good money behind it, but not one behind it. It is Australia. It can for eight months, bigger than THE EXORCIST. In Canada, it looks like PHANTOM's going to be bigger than anything released the last two years. They're predicting it's going to go into June. There's kids around the block. And then in New York, it didn't do anything.

WF: I think the whole film was promoted wrong. It was promoted like a rock album, not a film.

EW: If there's no more questions, I'd like to thank all you people for coming by.

WF: I'd like to thank Bill for having us.

Some movie posters are admired for their artistic composition; others are sought by collectors for their rarity and value. But the vast majority are complete failures both as works of art and as accurate reflections of the films they purport to herald. In this same spirit, PHOTON asked three pholk to scrape together a portfolio of imaginary ads, and while they'll never hang outside a theater lobby, they do represent all that is silly, but nevertheless fun, about actual advertising campaigns. We call them . . .

ONE SHOT ONE SHEETS



**GIANT STRIKES! AND EVERY
SECOND HE GROWS A MILE!**



**BIG
BIGGER
BIGGEST
BIGGER
THAN
"THE GIANT
GILA
MONSTER"**

**ALLIED ARTISTS
Presents**

**"FIVE
MILE**

MAN"
SEE



Starring **BRODERICK CRAWFORD** (Academy Award Winner) **SUZY KENDALL · FABIAN**
Produced by ALVY MOORE **Directed by BERT I. GORDON**

**LIKE EVERYTHING YOU'VE
SEEN BEFORE!**



**Gerald Mohr
Goldie Hawn
John Kerr
Bob Ball
Frankie Ray**

NOTHING CAN STOP IT EXCEPT DYNAMITE! COLOR

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SENSATION!

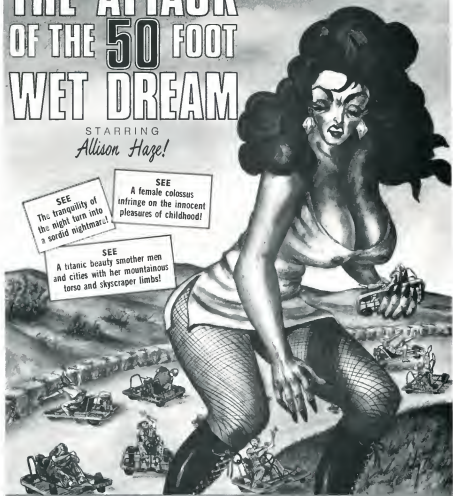
THE ATTACK OF THE 50 FOOT WET DREAM

STARRING
Allison Haze!

SEE
The tranquility of
the night turn into
a sordid nightmare!

SEE
A female colossus
infringe on the innocent
pleasures of childhood!

SEE
A titanic beauty smother men
and cities with her mountainous
torso and skyscraper limbs!



TOMMY	JACKIE	JOHNNY	BRANDON	RONNIE	BUTCH	RONNIE	TOMMY
RETING	COOPER	CRAWFORD	DeWILDE	BORST	JENKINS	HOWARD	KIRK

Based on an Off-Color Remark by	Directed by	Produced by	Costumes by	Music by	A
LENNIE BRUCE	BOB SWEENEY	REX REED	FREDERICKS OF HOLLYWOOD	THE CREAM	LONE STAR PRODUCTION

TERROR STRIKES

BUT YOU'LL NEVER SEE IT!



ALL OLD AND DARED AGAIN!

SEE

SEE

SEE



**Sinbad menaced
by the Sphinx!**



**Men poke sticks
at monsters!**



**The attack by 7
million skeletons!**

IN THE MIRACLE OF ANIMATION

COLUMBIA PICTURES
Presents
A
CHARLES H. SCHNORE
Production

SINBAD AT WIT'S END

starring
JOHN PHILLIP LAW
CAROLINE MUNRO
FRED MacMURRAY

Written by **GEORGE WORTHING YATES** • Creator of the Very Special Visual Effects
RAY HURRYHAUSEN • Music by **THE JORDANAIREs** • Produced by
CHARLES H. SCHNORE • Directed by **HUNTZ HALL** • TECHNICOLOR

THREE FOR THE SHOW

Three filmmakers reminisce about their contributions to the genre in a series of exclusive interviews conducted by Mark and Susan McGee

JACK ARNOLD



The films of director Jack Arnold were well-known to moviegoers of the Fifties, and some, like *THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN*, *CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON*, or *THE HOUSE THAT ROARED*, have remained favorites of fans and non-fans alike. During his most prolific and successful period at Universal International (a familiar studio with a now-discarded adjunct) he remained a "contract" director, even though his films were popular at the box office and a cut above his contemporaries in quality. He began his career not as a director, but as an actor—and perhaps it was this training, more than anything else, that enhanced the dramatic intensity of his films.

Jack Arnold was born on October 14, 1912 in New Haven, Connecticut. He attended Ohio University and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, and went on to become an actor on Broadway and in Britain until the advent of World War II. After serving in the Air Force for three years and making twenty-five documentary films for the State Department, he came to Universal-International Studios and directed his first film, *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE*, in 1952. Since then, he has been primarily a director and producer, with his most recent work in television.

His film credits are diverse in theme, but his artistry is best realized in documenting the unbelievable. Jack Arnold turned to directing movies at the age of forty, but he speaks of his film with a professional assurance and the proud enthusiasm of a childhood dream come true.

PHOTON: During the Fifties, Universal was producing a steady flow of horror films. Your product was consistently superior, in spite of the fact that the stories were no better or worse. I have always felt that this was probably because you were the best of their directors.

MR. ARNOLD: Yes, I was.

PHOTON: I've heard that you like *THE SHRINKING MAN* best of all your films. Did you have more time to work on it?

MR. ARNOLD: In preparation and shooting. I shot the animal first. I spent two weeks with cats, two weeks with spiders, and then we did the normal-sized sequences, and then the over-sized sequences.

PHOTON: Was that really the same spider that you used in *TARANTULA*, or was that just a studio fabrication?

MR. ARNOLD: We flew in sixty spiders that were large enough to regifter a depth of focus.

PHOTON: That was a great sequence.

MR. ARNOLD: People asked me at the time,

HERMAN COHEN



Somewhere there is probably a fan for every film that has ever been made... so if you are the one who likes *I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN* or *THE HEADLESS GHOST*...

In exploring the careers of exploitation-minded producers, it is admittedly difficult to define movies. Does one make a film which he knows is poor in every way only to cash in on a craze, or does he take an exploitable theme and produce what he feels is an aesthetically good film? Or is it really important?

Many producers have jumped on the exploitative bandwagon, but few have had the consistency or flair for decadence of Herman Cohen. And, from his background, it is not surprising that he was geared to the "business" approach to filmmaking. Born in Detroit, he is a veteran of the business of movies since age twelve, when he was an usher at Detroit's DeLoe theater. He continued in various theater-related jobs in Detroit until he became sales manager for Columbia pictures there. His first jobs as producer were at Realart and Jack Broder Productions in Hollywood. While owner of two theater chains in Detroit, he formed his own production company in Hollywood in 1953 and later was a producer primarily for American-International and Columbia.

PHOTON: How did you become interested in horror films?

MR. COHEN: It goes back a long way when I did a film called *CRIME OF PASSION* starring Barbara Stanwick. It was a helluva good picture. It got terrific reviews but died at the box office, so I took a tour of the country to see what was happening—this was around 1957—and I saw that the teenagers were becoming our big audience. They were the ones buying the records, going to the cinema and the theatre, and I felt this was the audience to appeal to. And, as a teenager myself, I always loved horror films—it took me out of the reality of everyday life—as I decided to produce *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF*.

PHOTON: So, actually, the idea to slant the pictures toward a younger audience was as much your own concept as it was American-International's?

MR. COHEN: No, not at the time. It started with *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF*.

PHOTON: When you started their whole

ROGER CORMAN



It has been a decade since Roger Corman became famous for his colorful cinematic adaptations of Poe classics, beginning with *THE HOUSE OF USHER* in 1960. Yet the enduring popularity of his Gothic films has never provoked a noticeable American cult of interest in his earlier works, outside of the knowledge that they were known for fast production (most were made in less than three weeks), low overhead, and sheer quantity. At the rate of about five a year, not all of them deserve to be remembered, but the horror films have a definite style and unique harvest, and several ended as minor classics of the genre. For Corman, a *BUCKET OF BLOOD* (made in few days in 1959) and *THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS* (made in two days in 1960) are unequalled. A *BUCKET OF BLOOD* is also one of the few chronicles of the forgotten American "beatnik" movement of the Fifties.

Roger Corman had no special formula for success. He relied on good planning, ambition, a proficient staff and his "educated guess" whereby "if you lack certain bits of information, you substitute your knowledge, training and instinct for what you're missing." In addition to utilizing familiar actors, he maintained a regular "stock company" of players—some of them friends—who primarily acted in Corman productions. Names like Barbara Morris, Dick Miller, Jonathan Haze, Max Wellis and Antony Carbone consistently appeared, and have not been seen with any frequency, either before or since. And perhaps this in itself was one secret to his phenomenally brief shooting schedules: he knew that cooperation was also an important ingredient. After all, "there was no time to fool around."

Corman believes in art that is commercial, and most of his films were made for American-International, a releasing company strongly linked with exploitation. In discussing art versus exploitation, he once said that the difference between them is that an art film needs good reviews in New York and Los Angeles, plus word of mouth to succeed, while an exploitation film can be controlled through advertising and publicity. "The distributor can completely reverse the fortunes of an exploitation picture by overhauling the advertising," Corman has remained on affable terms with American-International through the years, and in 1972 he revealed, "I keep thinking I'll leave them, but I sort of have a stake in the company. I have this recurring nightmare where I think I've made some picture for AIP long ago and they still owe me money. The trouble is I can't think of the name of the picture."

Roger Corman was born on April 5, 1926. He graduated from the engineering school at

"how do you direct a spider?" and my answer was, "with great difficulty!"

PHOTON: How did you manage to make that spider do what you wanted it to do?

MR. ARNOLD: We came up with the idea of using varied arachnids to guide him where we wanted him to go.

PHOTON: Did you ever use a wire to make them raise their legs when it was necessary?

MR. ARNOLD: "Blew air at them. We had to play that sequence to beats. We photographed the spider first, then the counts, we'd tell Grant Williams when to turn and when to throw.

PHOTON: Richard Matheson once said that he felt the film could have better performers, but I personally thought Grant Williams was just right.

MR. ARNOLD: I thought Grant Williams was an excellent choice. Most writers have a preconceived notion of what the characters should look like and they never get over it.

PHOTON: Did Matheson write a good script?

MR. ARNOLD: Dick wrote a fine script for the picture.

PHOTON: How do you feel about having a writer on the set?

MR. ARNOLD: Sometimes a scene doesn't play the way it's written. And I'm no writer. I would like to have the writer there to make the revisions. I wish he could be in an office somewhere nearby so that if I needed him, I could call him and he'd be right there. But I wouldn't want him on the set all of the time.

PHOTON: Did you film the script as it was written?

MR. ARNOLD: To a great extent. Sometimes a scene can make things awfully difficult. In *THE SHRINKING MAN*, Grant Williams is living in a matchbox under a water heater. And at one point in the story the heater starts to leak. The problem: how to make giant water-drops. We tried turning a giant faucet on and off, but that didn't work. Then I remembered something I found in my father's drawer when I was a little boy. I didn't know what they were used for at the time, but what I did was filled them with water and threw them at people. So I asked around the set—if anyone had one of these things. Sheepishly, someone finally admitted that he did, and I said, "give it to me." I filled it up with water, took it up to the rafters and dropped it. It looked like a drop and splashed on impact. I said, "that's it," and promptly ordered several gross of prophyllants. And they worked great. A few days later, when the picture was finished, I was called up to the front office and asked what the hell the prophyllants were for, and I told them it was a rough picture and we had a wild party afterward!

PHOTON: William Alland produced most of the Universal-International sci-fi pictures. Why didn't he do *THE SHRINKING MAN*?

MR. ARNOLD: In those days, the heads of the studios would give out assignments to contract producers and contract directors. Albert Zugsmith was just given the assignment and, really, had nothing to do with the picture. He is, in my opinion, a man of extreme bad taste.

PHOTON: Was he even on the set?

MR. ARNOLD: No. He didn't seem to understand it. He thought we were making an exploitation film.

PHOTON: I heard he didn't even read the book.

MR. ARNOLD: He never read the book, he never read the script. I told him to just stay out of my way. He's doing semi-pornographic films now, where he belongs.

PHOTON: In *Science Fiction in the Cosmos*, the author implies that your films show a definite affinity for the desert, calling it "Arnold country." I always felt you chose the desert because those stories could not have taken place in a populated area. Do you especially love the desert or its isolation from society?

MR. ARNOLD: No, I don't personally love the desert. I can think of many places I would rather be than the desert. The location does lend kind of a mood to those films. I think—*TARANTULA*, and especially in *IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE*—the vastness, the loneliness, the dead world, I was amazed to find sea shells. I used it to help create a mood. [Ed. note:

policy?

MR. COHEN: Myself and Jim Nicholson, who was the president of AIP. I had discussed the idea with him and decided to make the picture for American-International because Jim knew what I wanted to do.

PHOTON: Were any of your films influenced by films you saw in your youth?

MR. COHEN: I can't recollect any. **PHOTON:** *TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN* and *TEENAGE WEREWOLF* and several of your other films have villains who want to control and eventually corrupt another character. Are you fond of this theme?

MR. COHEN: We did that purposefully. Our films concerned teenagers who have doubts concerning their parents, their teachers, or what have you—that these influence a teenager to go "bad." I felt this would appeal to a teenage audience... which it did. I always had the teenage element because over seventy percent of our audiences were teenagers. And my teenagers were clean teenagers. They never took heroin up-them; they weren't involved in any illicit sex things, and my films always received PG ratings, when the ratings did start. My films were recommended, in fact, by PTA's and organizations all over the country.

PHOTON: Were you conscious of the strong similarity between *TEENAGE WEREWOLF* and *BLOOD OF DRACULA*?

MR. COHEN: Oh, yes. It worked so well, we just changed the werewolf to Dracula, added a female to switch it around. It was successful before, that's why we made it.

PHOTON: *TARGET EARTH* was quite a departure from your usual plot line. Since this is my favorite of your films, I'd like to know how you feel about it. Do you feel it was successful?

MR. COHEN: We shot that in seven days on a budget of \$75,000. I wished we could have had more money. We could only afford one take and made some bad choices. It was a good story. I bought it from a science fiction magazine. It was called "The Deadly City."

PHOTON: Since *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM*, your films have all been rather violent in nature. Would your earlier films have been as graphic if it hadn't been for the censorship problem?

MR. COHEN: It had nothing to do with censorship laws whatsoever. The stories were just that way, and plus the fact, when we had more money to spend on budgets we were able to do a lot more instead of just talk about it. We were able to show it. And these pictures you mentioned, *HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM*, *KONGA*, and *BERSERK*, cost a helluva lot more money than the last pictures.

PHOTON: In the Michael Gough film, the principal character is a villain. In all of these films, he is completely corrupt, unlikable, arrogant and void of humanity. Don't you think this would tend to alienate an audience from identifying with him and therefore cancel any real participation?

MR. COHEN: Not at all. Whether it's Michael Gough or Vincent Price, the audience won't take a character like that serious. They're having fun with the picture. Even if you play it straight, they're sitting in their seats with tongue-in-cheek. They know exactly what's going to happen. The only thing I can hope to do with my audience is to let them have a good time and make them come now and then. When they're laughing at Michael Gough, throw them off-balance and make them scream. And it doesn't have to be bloody to do that. It could be an inventive way of using our camera or show anything, it doesn't have to be blood drippings. I try to stay away from that.

PHOTON: Were you surprised by the wild success of *TEENAGE WEREWOLF*?

MR. COHEN: I'm always surprised when pictures make money. But you see that title was so kinky and so fun that comedians all over the world picked-up on it. It became part

Stanford and later attended Oxford University in England. After two years in the navy, he came to Southern California in 1949 and became a messenger at Twentieth Century-Fox Studios. In that same year, he became a story analyst and, the next year, a literary agent. By 1953, he had formed Roger Corman Productions and released *FIVE GUNS WEST* in 1954. From then on, he continued to direct and produce a steady flow of films for his production company. He also continued his producing and directing talents in a short-lived release company, The Filmgroup. He now heads New World Pictures, his own successful distribution company. His total directional credits number about sixty, and he has produced nearly a hundred and thirty films to date.

Since *HOUSE OF USHER*, the name of Roger Corman has appeared in many a film fan's index of "must see" entrepreneurs. Discussions have either concentrated on his "Poe year," or concept of film as a creative commodity. And thanks go to Wayne Waga here for some excellent quotes from his Corman interview which appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* of February 25, 1973. Here is the best of both—a chance to catch the prologue while anticipating the climax.

PHOTON: You seem to enjoy working quickly. Do you think a shorter schedule picture will most challenging and therefore more fun for you?

MR. CORMAN: More fun without question, but it hurts the picture. You gain something, a certain spontaneity, a certain energy working that way. And to me, it was partially a game to work on something like *LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS* with a two-day schedule, or *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* which had five. Like going out and playing tennis. It was really a sport to see if you could do it. And, as I said, you gain something from it but it's pretty hard to get much quality working that fast.

PHOTON: I noticed quite a bit of similarity between the plots in these two films. Up to that time, *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* was, I believe, your shortest feature picture. So I suppose you had to make *LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS*, did you just automatically choose the same story?

MR. CORMAN: It was basically the same story because we liked *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* and the sets were up. My brother was doing a picture and had built a fairly nice set. The head of the studio had told me that they didn't have any other pictures coming in. So I had the idea to try one in two days. We decided to take an adaptation of *A BUCKET OF BLOOD* because we had to have the script in something like ten days. There was no time to fool around.

PHOTON: Was that shot with two cameras simultaneously?

MR. CORMAN: Yeah. That's the only time I've shot that. You gain speed by having a lot in your lighting because you have to light "fast."

PHOTON: Many times people read things into films that their creators had no intention of saying. I felt that in *A BUCKET OF BLOOD*, you were trying to make a comment on art. Am I right, or just full of wild blueberry muffs?

MR. CORMAN: You're right. In almost every film I've made there has been some statement somewhere there in the back. I'm a firm believer that a film must work on several levels. I don't want to push that too heavily, though, because I try not to get pretentious. I prefer that if it's a question of making my point too heavily or of not making it at all, I would rather make the mistake of not making it at all.

PHOTON: Were there any films that influenced your work?

MR. CORMAN: None specifically. I like the work of directors that most other people like. I liked Eisenstein's work very much, John Ford, Alfred Hitchcock, Hawks, to a lesser extent, Frieder Peck Bogdanovich is a great admirer of Hawks. He was good but not that good. I like Bergman a great deal also.

PHOTON: I agree with your attitude about not taking too long to make a certain type of film, but I remember reading somewhere that you said one shouldn't spend longer than a week on the script. I feel this is where the most time should be spent.

MR. CORMAN: I think I was probably mis-

In **TARANTULA**, John Agar notes, "You can still find sea shells if you keep your eyes open." The sea has the same kind of feeling for me.

PHOTON: Do you agree that those stories would have been impossible to execute as successfully in another environment?

MR. ARNOLD: I think it would have been very difficult.

PHOTON: You wrote the story for **MONOLITH MONSTERS**, and it certainly seemed like your kind of film. Why didn't you direct it?

MR. ARNOLD: They were upgrading me at the time and wanted me to do a picture with Lana Turner.

PHOTON: I imagine, then, you didn't mind not directing it, as you liked the promotion?

MR. ARNOLD: I liked it, sure. And they were getting closer with the science fiction field and phasing it out.

PHOTON: But you enjoyed working on science fiction?

MR. ARNOLD: Loved it.

PHOTON: Would you like to do another one?

MR. ARNOLD: Certainly... another **BLACK LAGOON** or **TARANTULA**. I've been having great difficulty finding a story like.

PHOTON: Returning to **IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE**, did you feel the script measured a bit?

MR. ARNOLD: I think all of Bradbury's works are wonderful. He's not particularly a writer for visuals.

PHOTON: But, he didn't write the script.

MR. ARNOLD: No, he wrote the story. Harry Essex wrote the script. I guess now it would be measuring.

PHOTON: There were some great moments in the film, such as the sequence where Putnam follows the two inmates into the alley. Was that in the script?

MR. ARNOLD: Yes. I chose the location and chose how to play those scenes.

PHOTON: Did you like the 3-D process?

MR. ARNOLD: I think it was a marvelous effect. I wish they would have found a way that you didn't have to wear glasses.

PHOTON: I have always felt that if a movie is interesting, the viewer will forget about the 3-D; and if it is not by the 3-D, it only because the picture isn't involving enough.

MR. ARNOLD: I don't think it defeats itself. You could say that about color. If it is a good film in color, it would be just as good in black-and-white.

PHOTON: Of the three "Creature" films, I thought **REVENGE OF THE CREATURE** was superior.

MR. ARNOLD: We shot that in Marineland. The story had him captured and put into a tank. I asked if they'd do us a favor and put a net and divide the dangerous fish and put them on one side, and leave the fish that looked bad but were harmless on the other. They said they would. Well, when I got there the day we were ready to shoot, I went up to look at the tank, and there was no net. I said, "fellas, I gotta get actors in there." They said not to worry, that they feed the fish every hour on the hour and that the divers go down all of the time. I said that it was a diver's job, but these were actors—to get them to walk up a three-foot hill was a stunt." They said they couldn't use a net. Well, Riccio Browning put on the suit and dove right in, he didn't care, and I looked at the cameraman and he looked at me and said, "if you want to get those actors in there, you'd better go in yourself." I said, "what the hell do you mean I'd better?" So I put on the mask and jumped in, but I kept my eyes closed. Then I slowly opened one eye and I was looking down the spine mouth of a shark. I wondered, what the hell do you? Do you move, or not move? And he just went by me (it felt like sandpaper as he rubbed against me) and I shot up out of the water and said, "there's nothing to it, kids." The biggest trouble that we had was with a turtle who kept biting chunks out of the monster's ass.

PHOTON: Did you want to shoot at night?

MR. ARNOLD: I would have liked to, but they said it was too dangerous.

PHOTON: Next to **THE SHRINKING MAN**, **TARANTULA** is my favorite film of yours.

of our language. So here we are, fifteen years later, and people are still making jokes about I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF.

PHOTON: Did **TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN** do as well at the box office?

MR. COHEN: Not as well, but almost.

PHOTON: What was the average shooting time on your early films?

MR. COHEN: They were "budget" pictures. The shooting schedule was anywhere from seven to nine days.

PHOTON: Of all your early films, do you have a favorite?

MR. COHEN: I naturally liked the original monster.

PHOTON: I personally felt Gene Fowler did the best job of creating an atmosphere in the werewolf film. Why didn't you ever use him again?

MR. COHEN: The atmosphere in I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF was not because of Gene Fowler. He was a film editor and I gave him the chance to direct. But I was very much into the rest of all of the time with a very good photographer named Joseph Lubelle. But, to answer your question, I had a few problems with Gene Fowler, so I personally felt he was not the director for me. He did not go back to directing except for a picture called **THE SLOB**.

PHOTON: I think it was I MARRIED A MONSTER.

MR. COHEN: Oh, yes. Well, he went back to being an editor and he's a very fine editor. I've given many people their first opportunities—editors, musicians, and on and on.

PHOTON: You made seven films for American-International, all of them successful. Why, after **KONGA**, did you depart from the studio?

MR. COHEN: Well, AIP is not a studio, it is a distribution organization. And I departed because of a conflict with one of the partners, and his name was not Jim Nicholson.

PHOTON: I've heard you work very closely with the scriptwriter on your films, so I felt justified in asking a question concerning plot construction. Why, in **KONGA**, did you have the girl (Sandra Banks) eaten by the plants when she had done nothing to make the audience reish such a grisly death?

MR. COHEN: I wanted to use my carnivorous plants. She was a very pretty girl, and very sexy, and I thought the audience would get a big kick out of seeing her killed rather than Margo Johns or Michael Gough.

PHOTON: I've spotted you in **HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER**, **BEISENK**, and **TROG**. Have you appeared in any of your other films?

MR. COHEN: I've been in all of my films. I did the "Hitchcock" thing before I realized Hitchcock was doing it.

PHOTON: I thought **TROG** was one of your best ideas. Who wrote the original story?

MR. COHEN: Two fellows, John Gilling and Peter Bryan. I bought it from them and changed it quite a bit.

PHOTON: I thought the idea was good but I wasn't as pleased with the execution.

MR. COHEN: How can you say that when you haven't read the original script?

PHOTON: I was just going by the concept of having a prehistoric man suddenly faced with the modern day world. I didn't feel it reached its potential.

MR. COHEN: Is this an interview or are you telling me how to make pictures?

PHOTON: No, I mean...

MR. COHEN: I mean, it is supposed to be an interview and you're telling me about the story and execution of my picture.

PHOTON: I'm sorry, I shouldn't have brought it up.

MR. COHEN: No, you can say what you like, but this is supposed to be an interview and whether you dig it or don't dig it...

PHOTON: That's part of the interview. **MR. COHEN:** You're right. I apologize. We'll go on to something else.

MR. COHEN: Mind you, that you're

quoted. The fact of the matter is I can't remember a script that was ever written in a week. I always was, and still am, a great believer in pre-production planning.

PHOTON: Your career in horror films began in the mid Fifties. I've heard that you had something to do with **BEAST** with 1,000,000 EYES, and yet your name doesn't appear on the credits. Was this really your first horror film?

MR. COHEN: **BEAST** with 1,000,000 EYES was a picture for which I put up the money. Dave Kramsky produced it as my assistant. I had a multiple-picture deal with American International. I had the opportunity to do more pictures and I had written the same money to make the picture. But he had a little bit of money, so Dave felt that he could make the picture for a very small amount—which he did. I read the script and had some approval as to what was going on.

PHOTON: What did you do on **MONSTER FROM THE OCEAN FLOOR**?

MR. COHEN: That was the first picture I ever made. I produced the idea for the script. I was mine. I had seen a picture in the paper of a one-man submarine that the Aerojet General Company had made, and I was trying to get started and thought this would be a good basis for a science fiction picture. I called Aerojet and said if they would let me use it in the picture, I would give them a lot of front publicity. They said yes. I then talked the writer into writing the script, raised six thousand dollars, and we made the picture for a total of twelve thousand, and six thousand deferred, as I recall.

PHOTON: When you made **DAY THE WORLD ENDED**, there had only been one bomb-scare film before yours, I believe, and that was Arch Oboler's **FIVE**. Whose idea was that picture?

MR. COHEN: I think the idea was mine, but it came out of a meeting with Jim Nicholson. We worked the idea out together, and it was written by Lou Rusoff, after an under contract to them at the time.

PHOTON: For **IT CONQUERED THE WORLD**, Paul Blaisdell designed a monster which I felt should have been kept in dim lighting, like the Morlocks in **THE TIME MACHINE**.

MR. COHEN: Yes. Actually, the original idea for that design was mine and I was playing too much back to my early physics classes. Again, this was a long time ago and I don't remember exactly but, to the best of my knowledge, it was supposed to have come from a very big planet. Therefore, obviously, it would have a very heavy gravity, any creature on such a planet would be built very low to the ground. I believe it was scientifically correct, except that when the thing was built, I realized that it was very unflattering because it was so low to the ground. There's something to the concept of fear in looking up to something bigger or taller. In the original script it was supposed to stay in the cave. We had one or two shots when it came out and I don't remember why.

PHOTON: Were you aware that there was a re-make of **IT CONQUERED THE WORLD** called **ZONTAR, THE THING FROM VENUS**?

MR. COHEN: Yes. AIP re-made a number of those old films. I wasn't aware that there was one of that specifically, but I knew they took a number of the old scripts. I think Larry Buchanan remade all of them. I don't know in...

PHOTON: Florida?

MR. COHEN: Yeah... in Florida or maybe in Dallas, for a very small amount of money, to sell directly to television. I've never seen any of the films.

PHOTON: They're horrible.

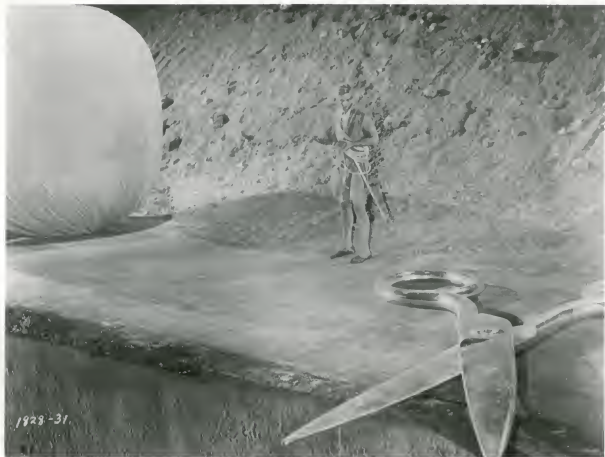
MR. COHEN: Are they bad?

PHOTON: The picture, the movie.

MR. COHEN: That's strange, because Larry Buchanan's a fairly talented guy. I'm surprised.

PHOTON: One major drawback was that he didn't film a "master" shot to cover the continuity. He shot a close-up and if something didn't work, though he...

MR. COHEN: Well, he was given awfully small money. He was making those films for thirty, forty thousand dollars apiece in color,



MR. ARNOLD: I wrote it.

PHOTON: You mean the original story?

MR. ARNOLD: Yes.

PHOTON: Although I like it very much, it does seem like a hurried project. Some dialog isn't well thought out and there's a lot of padding. Was it rushed?

MR. ARNOLD: It was a low-budget film. It came at the tail-end of the cycle. The Japanese were putting out a lot of product. American International started imitating our product. There were parodies of our titles, like "The Abominable Growing Man." So Universal decided to make a few more, only at half the price and half the time, and you can't do that kind of a show as well with the budget and time limitations that we had.

PHOTON: I'd like to talk about MONSTER ON THE CAMPUS.

MR. ARNOLD: Oh, please!

PHOTON: I liked it better than the "Creature" films.

MR. ARNOLD: You did? Frankly, I did it as a favor for Joe Garshom. I thought the script was badly written. I only did it because of my love for Joe. I tried to take a bad script and make it look good.

PHOTON: I thought you did.

MR. ARNOLD: I was fighting a lot of elements on the picture and lost perspective on it.

PHOTON: Did you really hate the finished product?

MR. ARNOLD: I'm my own worst critic. I can see dailies and cringe and ask myself why I shot it that way. I didn't really hate it, but I didn't think it was up to the other films I had done.

PHOTON: There are some great moments in the picture. Granted, some of the coincidences are hard to swallow, but that scene where Arthur Franz has changed into the prehistoric man, looks around the room, and smashes the window is great.

MR. ARNOLD: The script had him going out the door. He wouldn't know what a door was. He'd go out the first hole he could find. That was a bit of the writing that bothered me.

PHOTON: It seemed obvious to anyone that Franz was the creature. Do you feel it would have been better to conceal this more?

MR. ARNOLD: Yes.

PHOTON: One of the worst scenes is the blood dripping into the pipe.

MR. ARNOLD: I agree.

PHOTON: Did you shoot it fast?

MR. ARNOLD: Twelve days.

PHOTON: Looked good.

MR. ARNOLD: I worked hard on it. I think the science fiction films are going to get better in the next few years. I know I'm going to try to make some.

terribly interested in these things and that you can know all of this is fine, but when you start telling me about how a picture should be made from an original story which you know nothing about, I think that's a lot of damn nerve.

PHOTON: Yes, I agree, I...

MR. COHEN: I mean, whether you dug it or not... I mean, if you're going to talk as a critic, then talk as a critic... otherwise...

PHOTON: Yes, I stand well rebuked. What are your future plans?

MR. COHEN: My next film is going to be with Jack Palance.



which is very difficult.

PHOTON: The bulk of your early films were done for AIP, but three of your projects were for Allied Artists.

MR. CORMAN: Simply, they offered me a deal I was working in various places around town—quite a bit for AIP—and I liked the idea of moving around so that I didn't get identified with one company. In the long run, I probably got along better with the people at AIP. Nicholson and Arkwright understood low-budget production a little better than Allied Artists did at the time, although I was pleased with my arrangements at AA.

PHOTON: THE UNDEAD was hardly a standard "formula" picture. How did you persuade AIP to gamble on that project?

MR. CORMAN: At the time I'd so long ago I hardly remember these things! There was something very famous around the country about a woman who claimed to have lived...

PHOTON: Brides Murphy.

MR. CORMAN: Brides Murphy, right. And there was a lot of interest in the Brides Murphy phenomenon, so this was an attempt to do kind of a fantasy horror along that line.

PHOTON: It was a very strange film.

MR. CORMAN: It was a very strange film. I haven't seen it for a long, long time. I was maybe a little too ambitious for ten days and seventy or eighty thousand dollars. This is one of the things I learned: over the long run, we were better off making a small picture for a small amount of money than trying to make a big one and cheat it.

PHOTON: Do you have a particular favorite among your early horror films, the pre-Pos period?

MR. CORMAN: I wouldn't have any one in particular, maybe NOT OF THIS EARTH, or A BUCKET OF BLOOD because it was a comedy, or LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS because it was comedy-horror—but none specifically.

PHOTON: What happened to your production/releasing company, The Filmgroup?

MR. CORMAN: I didn't have that much money at the time. I was making very low-budget films for it; films that cost twenty-five, thirty, thirty-five thousand for black-and-white. The color films might cost fifty thousand. It was just too small an operation. The company actually made money, but it didn't make very much money and I eventually got bored with it.

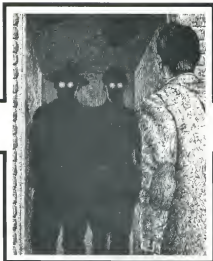
PHOTON: X, THE MAN WITH X-RAY EYES was probably one of your most ambitious films.

MR. CORMAN: I feel it was an opportunity that was slightly missed. The original idea to do a picture about a man who could see through objects was Ben Nicholson's and then the development of the basic idea was mine and Ray Russell's. I almost didn't do the picture for two reasons: one, I felt the script had not turned out as well as I had expected; and two, the more I got into it, the more I felt we were going to be heavily dependent on the special effects. The picture was shot in three weeks on a medium-low budget and I felt we were not going to be able to photograph what Xavier could see, and that the audience would be cheated. The picture turned out reasonably well but I think, when finished, it did suffer from that. The effects just weren't there. We did the best we could. To show a man seeing through a building I photographed buildings that were in various stages of construction, on the basis he could see through the outer skin—which was a reasonable cheat—but it still was a cheat.



JACK ARNOLD

HIS SCIENCE-FANTASY FILMS



IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE

UI 3-D

1953

82 minutes. Released in June. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by William Alland. Screenplay by Harry Essex. Based on a treatment by Ray Bradbury. Photographed by Clifford Stone. Designed by Bernard Herbinson and Robert Boyle.

Cast: Richard Carlson, Barbara Rush, Charles Drake, Russell Johnson, Joe Sawyer, Kathleen Hughes.

CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON

UI 3-D

1954

70 minutes. Released in March. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by William Alland. Screenplay by Harry Essex and Arthur Ross. Based on a story by Maurice Zimm. Photographed by William E. Snyder. Underwater photography by James C. Havens. Designed by Bernard Herbinson and Hilary Swain.

Cast: Richard Carlson, Julie Adams, Richard Dunning, Carlos Rivas, Whit Bissell, Nestor Pava. The Creature: Ben Chapman.

REVENGE OF THE CREATURE

UI 3-D

1955

82 minutes. Released in May. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by William Alland. Screenplay by Martin Berkeley. Photographed by Charles S. Willsbourne. Designed by Alexander Goltzen and Alfred Sweeney.

Cast: John Agar, Lori Nelson, John Bromfield, Robert S. Williams, Nestor Pava, Clint Eastwood. The Creature: Riccio Browning.

TARANTULA

UI

1955

80 minutes. Released in October. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by William Alland. Screenplay by Martin Berkeley and Robert M. Price. Photographed by Clifford Stone. Designed by Alexander Goltzen and Alfred Sweeney. Make-up by Jack Kwan.

Cast: John Agar, Mara Corday, Leo G. Carroll, Nestor Pava, Ross Elliott, Steve Denett, Hank Patterson, Raymond Bailey, Bert Holland, Ed Hand, Clint Eastwood.



THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING MAN

UI

1957

80 minutes. Released in April. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by Albert Zoppereh. Screenplay by Richard Matheson. Based on his novel, *The Shrinking Man*. Photographed by Ella Carter. Special effects by Clifford Stone. Optical effects by Russell A. Hoffman and Everett A. Slossard. Designed by Alexander Goltzen and Robert Ciesworthy. Trumpet solo by Ray Anthony. Title theme by Frank Carling and Earl Lawrence.

Cast: Grant Williams, Randy Stewart, April Kent, Paul Langdon, Raymond Bailey, William Schallert, Diane Derry, Frank Sennell, Helene Marshall, Billy Curtis.

MONSTER ON THE CAMPUS

UI

1958

76 minutes. Released in November. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by Joseph Genderson. Screenplay by David Duncan. Photographed by Clifford Stone. (Shooting title: *MONSTER IN THE NIGHT*.)

Cast: Arthur Franz, Johanna Moore, Jackson Rost, Nancy Walters, Troy Donahue, Whit Bissell, Hank Patterson. The Beast: Ed Parker.

THE SPACE CHILDREN

PARAMOUNT

1958

89 minutes. Released in June. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by William Alland. Screenplay by Bernard Schoenfeld. Based on a story by Tom Filer. Photographed by Ernst Lucido. Special effects by John P. Fulton. Designed by Hal Pereira and Roland Andersen.

Cast: Michael Ray, Adam Williams, Peggy Webber, Johnny Washbrook, Jackie Coogan, Richard Shannon, Raymond Bailey, Sandy Decker, Larry Parnell, John Crawford, Russell Johnson.

THE MOUSE THAT ROARED

COLUMBIA

1959

83 minutes. Directed by Jack Arnold. Produced by Walter Shenson and Jun Persington. Screenplay by Stanley Mann and Roger Madauag, from a novel by Leonard Wibberly. The March of the Gargues.

Cast: Peter Sellers, Jean Seberg, William Hartnell, David Kossoff, Leo McKern.



HERMAN COHEN

HIS SCIENCE-FANTASY FILMS



TARGET EARTH AA 1954

75 minutes, Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Sherman A. Rose; Screenplay by William Rayner, Original Screenplay by Wyatt Orndy & James Nicholson, Based on the Short Story "The Deadly City" by Paul W. Fuxman

Cast: Richard Denning, Virginia Grey, Richard Reeves, Kathleen Crowley, Robert Rock, Matt Marshall, Arthur Space, Whit Bissell, Steve Pendleton, Hesse Peters, Jr.

I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF AIP 1957

76 minutes, Sunset Production; Presented by James H. Nicholson & Samuel Z. Arkoff; Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Gene Fowler, Jr.; Screenplay by Ralph Thompson; Cast: Michael Landon, Whit Bissell, Yvonne Lynn, Tony Marshall, Dawn Richards, Barney Phillips, Ken Miller, Cindy Robbins, Michael Roizen, Robert Griffin, Joseph Mel, Malcolm Atterbury, Eddie Mer, Vladimir Sokoloff, Louise Lewis.

I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN AIP 1957

74 minutes, color sequence, Santa Rosa Production; Presented by James H. Nicholson & Samuel Z. Arkoff; Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Herbert L. Strock; Screenplay by Kenneth Langtry.

Cast: Whit Bissell, Phyllis Coates, Robert Burton, Gary Conway, George Lynn, John Cull, Marshall Bradford, Claude Brin, Angie Blake, Russ Whiteman, Charles Sed, Paul Kent, Gletcher Thomas, Jay Slater, Larry Carr, Pat Miller.

BLOOD OF DRACULA AIP 1957

69 minutes, Carmel Production; Presented by James H. Nicholson & Samuel Z. Arkoff; Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Herbert L. Strock; Screenplay by Ralph Thompson.

Cast: Sandra Harmon, Louise Lewis, Gail Gerling, Jerry Sterne, Heather Ames, Malcolm Atterbury, Mary Adams, Thomas B. Henry, Joanne Dean, Don Deville, Richard Denon, Paul Maxwell, Gayle Mitchell, Shirley De Lancy, Michael Hall.

HOW TO MAKE A MONSTER AIP 1958

72 minutes, Sequence in Color; Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Herbert L. Strock; Screenplay & Story by Kenneth Langtry & Herman Cohen.

Cast: Robert H. Harris, Paul Brinagat, Gary Conway, Gary Clarke, Malcolm Atterbury, Dennis Cross, Martin Aronson, Walter Reed, Paul Maxwell, Eddie Marr, Heather Ames, Robert Shyne, Red Dana, Jacqueline Davis, John Chandler, Thomas B. Henry, John Phelps, Pauline Myers, John Aubley.

THE HEADLESS GHOST English/AIP 1958

63 minutes, Presented by James H. Nicholson & Samuel Z. Arkoff; Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Peter Graham Scott; Screenplay by Herman Cohen & Kenneth Langtry; Cast: Richard Lyon, Liane Scottano, David Rose, Clive Revell, Jack Eilan, Alexander Archfield, Carl Bernard, Josephine Blake, John Stary, Donald Bessie, Mary Barclay, Patrick Conner, Trevor Barnet.

HORRORS OF THE BLACK MUSEUM English/AIP 1959

81 minutes, Easman Color & Cinemascope, Executive Producer: Herman Cohen, Produced

by Jack Greenwood; Directed by Arthur Crabtree; Screenplay by Allen Kandel & Herman Cohen.

Cast: Michael Gough, June Cunningham, Graham Curnow, Shirley Ann Field, Geoffrey Keen, Gerald Anderson, John Warwick, Benno Vany, Austin Trevor, Miko Poutas, Howard Green, Gerald Stevens, Stuart Saunders, Mike Barry, Nora Gordon.

KIDNAP English/AIP 1960

90 minutes, In Color, Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by John Lemont; Screenplay & Original Story by Herman Cohen & Allen Kandel.

Cast: Michael Gough, Marge Johns, Glenn Gordon, Jess Conrad, Austin Trevor, Jack Warner, George Padell, Vanda Goddell, Stanley Morgan, Glenn Arnold, Leonard Sachs, Nicholas Bennett, Kim Tandy, Rupert Gibson, Waverly Lee, John Walsh.

BLACK ZOO AA 1963

66 minutes, In Panavision & Eastman Color; Produced by Herman Cohen; Directed by Robert Gordon; Screenplay by Allen Kandel & Herman Cohen.

Cast: Michael Gough, Joanne Cooper, Rod Lauren, Virginia Grey, Jerome Cowan, Elisha Cook, Warren Olt, Marianna Hill, Dan Curtis, Eileen Jansen, Eric Stone, Dan Lynn, Susan Stearn, Edward Platt, Douglas Henderson, Jerry Douglas, Claudia Brack, Genet Kurick, Byron Morrow, Michael St. Angel.

A STUDY IN TERROR English Compton-Sir Nigel 1965

94 minutes, In Eastman Color (ColumbiaColor) by Pathe, Released in the U.S. by Columbia; Presented by Michael Klingner & Tony Tenser, Executive Producer: Herman Cohen, Produced by Henry E. Lester, Directed by James Hill; Screenplay by Donald Ford & Derek Ford.

Cast: John Neville, Donald Houston, John Fraser, Anthony Quayle, Robert Morley, Barbara Windsor, Adrienne Cori, Frank Finlay, Judi Dench, Charles Regnier, Barry Jones, Terry Doremus, Dudley Foster, Peter Garsden, Chastane Maybach, Kay Walsh, John Gaisney, Edna Barry, Ann Durrage, Barbara Leake, Patrick Newell, Norma Foster.

BERSERK! English 1968

96 minutes, In Technicolor, Released in the U.S. by Columbia; Produced by Herman Cohen & Robert Sterne; Directed by Jim O'Connell; Screenplay by Allen Kandel & Herman Cohen.

Cast: Joan Crawford, Ty Hardin, Gena Dorn, Michael Gough, Judy Gerson, Robert Hardy, Geoffrey Keen, Sydney Taylor, George Clayton, Philip Madoc, Gaille Culinar, Ted Lunt, Milton Rod.

ORAZ English 1964

In Technicolor, Released in the U.S. by Warner Brothers; Produced by Herman Cohen, Executive Producer: Gunter Berns; Directed by Freddie Francis; Screenplay by Allen Kandel & Herman Cohen, Based on the novel *Reverend Abel* by Henry Scowron; Makeup by Bill Lodge; Music by John Scott.

Cast: Jack Palance, Dana Dorn, John Ege, Edith Evans, Hugh Griffith, Trevor Howard, Michael Jayson, Gary Kandel, Martin Potter.

ROGER CORMAN



HIS SCIENCE-FANTASY FILMS

Films Directed by Roger Corman:

THE DAY THE WORLD ENDED	AMERICAN RELIANT	1955
78 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Golden State Production, Executive Producer: Alex Gordon, Story and Screenplay by Lou Rusoff, Photography by Jack Finndel, Music by Ronald Stein		
IT CONQUERED THE WORLD	AIP	1956
55 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Sunset Production, Screenplay by Lou Rusoff, Photography by Fred West, Music by Ronald Stein, Sound by Phil Mitchell		
NOT OF THIS EARTH	AA	1967
66 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Los Altos Production, Screenplay by Charles Griffith and Mark Hanna, Photography by John Merrill, Music by Ronald Stein		
THE UNDEAD	AIP	1967
71 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Ballou Production, Screenplay by Charles Griffith and Mark Hanna, Photography by John Merrill, Music by Ronald Stein		
ATTACK OF THE CRAZY MONSTERS	AA	1957
62 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Los Altos Production, Screenplay by Charles B. Griffith, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Ronald Stein		
THE VIKING WOMEN AND THE SEA SERPENT	AIP	1958
85 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Malibu Production, Screenplay by Lawrence Louis Goldstein, from a story by Irving Block and Jack Rabier, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Walter Greene		
TEENAGE CAVEWOMAN	AIP	1958
65 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Malibu Production, Screenplay by R. Wright Campbell, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Al Glasser		
A BUCKET OF BLOOD	AIP	1959
66 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Charles Griffith, Photography by Jack Marston, Music by Fred Katz		
THE WASP WOMAN	FILMGROUP	1959
66 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Santa Clara Production, Screenplay by Leo Gordon, from a story by Krista Zentgraf, Photography by Harry C. Newman, Music by Fred Katz		
THE HOUSE OF USHER; THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER	AIP	1960
80 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Richard Matheson, from the story "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Les Baxter, Paintings by Burt Scherberg		
THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS	FILMGROUP	1960
70 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Santa Clara Production, Screenplay by Charles Griffith, Photography by Arch Oboler, Music by Fred Katz		
THE LAST WOMAN ON EARTH	FILMGROUP	1960
71 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Filmgroup Production, Screenplay by Robert Towne, Photography by Jack Marston, Music by Ronald Stein		
ATLAS	FILMGROUP	1960
79 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Filmgroup and Patamirtheides Production, Screenplay by Charles Griffith, Photography by Basil Mayes, Music by Ronald Stein		
CREATURE FROM THE HAUNTED SEA	FILMGROUP	1960
63 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Filmgroup Production, Screenplay by Charles Griffith		
THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM	AIP	1961
66 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Richard		

Matheson, from the story by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Les Baxter		
PREMATURE BURIAL	AIP	1962
61 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Santa Clara Production, Screenplay by Charles Beaumont and Ray Russell, from the story by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Ronald Stein		
TALES OF TERROR	FILMGROUP/AIP	1962
66 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Richard Matheson from "Mystery" "The Black Cat" and "The Gask of Amontillado" and "The Face in the Case of Mr. Valdemar" by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Les Baxter		
TOWER OF LONDON	AA	1963
79 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Admiral Picture Inc., Screenplay by Leo Gordon, James Gordon, and Arno Powell, from a story by Leo Gordon and Arno Powell, Photography by Arch R. Oboler, Edited by Ronald Sinclair, Art Direction by Daniel Haller, Music by Michael Anderson		
THE RAVEN	AIP	1963
66 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Richard Matheson from the poem by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Les Baxter		
THE TERROR	FILMGROUP/AIP	1963
61 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, A Filmgroup Production, Screenplay by Leo Gordon and Jack M. T. Photography by John Nickolaus, Music by Ronald Stein		
X, THE MAN WITH X-RAY EYES	AIP	1963
60 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Robert O'Brien and Ray Russell, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Les Baxter		
THE HAUNTED PALACE	AIP	1963
67 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Charles Beaumont from the poem by Edgar Allan Poe and the story by H.P. Lovecraft, Photography by Floyd Crosby, Music by Ronald Stein		
THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH	AIP	1964
62 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, An Alta Vista/Anglo Amalgamated Production, Screenplay by Charles Beaumont and R. Wright Campbell from the story by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Nicholas Roeg, Music by David Lee		
THE TOMB OF LIGERIA	AIP	1964
61 minutes, Produced by Pat Green, An Alta Vista Production, Screenplay by Robert Towne from the story by Edgar Allan Poe, Photography by Arthur Grant, Music by Kenneth V. Jones		
GAS-S-SINGING OR IT BECAME NECESSARY TO DESTROY	AIP	1971
79 minutes, Produced by Roger Corman, Screenplay by George Armitage, Cinematography by Ron Dexter, Music by Country Joe McDonald and Barry Melton, Films Produced by Corman include		
MONSTER FROM THE DEEP FLOOR (Lippert, 1964)		
BEAST WITH 1,000,000 EYES (American Releasing, 1956)		
NIGHT OF THE BLOOD BEAST (AIP, 1956)		
THE BRAIN EATERS (AIP, 1966)		
DIE GIANT LEECHES (AIP, 1968)		
BEAST FROM THE HAUNTED CAVE (Filmgroup, 1959)		
BATTLE BEYOND THE SUN (Filmgroup, 1962)		
MAGIC VOYAGE OF SINBAO (Filmgroup, 1962)		
CEMENTIA 13 (Filmgroup/AIP, 1963)		
QUEEN OF BLOOD (AIP, 1965)		
DUNWICH HORROR (AIP, 1969)		

CURSE OF THE DEMON

an analysis of jacques tourneur's
supernatural masterpiece

by ronald v. borst and scott mac queen

vengeance of Mr. Karwell, a mysterious and evil alchemist, is related in rather ambiguous terms.

Edward Dunning, an alchemical authority who has rejected one of Karwell's manuscripts submitted to a scientific council, becomes convinced that Karwell may seek a reckoning. Ten years prior, Karwell had written his own *History of Witchcraft*, a book whose content was meticulously researched, but which was curiously hapless in points of style and form. The most sinister of Karwell's critics, John Harrington, died mysteriously after printing his scathing review. He had been walking home along a country road late one evening when suddenly, it seemed, he had begun to run like mad, eventually turning up a tree, and then lifting and breaking his neck. Although people suggested the possibility of savage dogs or other beasts being at fault, nothing was ever proven one way or another in regard to the man's death. The secretary of the scientific council learns that Karwell has discovered that it was Dunning who rejected his recently submitted paper, and warns Dunning to be on his guard. He also informs him in contact with Henry Harrington, brother of the deceased critic. Together, the two men piece together the threads that bind Karwell with John Harrington's untimely demise.

Unexplainable events had plagued Harrington before his death. A parchment with runic symbolism it was found in a program given him by a stout, clean-shaven man (Karwell) during a concert. Anonymous "gifts" arrived at the hotel, including a woodcut of a man walking a moonlit road with a demon creature in pursuit (illustrating a portion of *The Ancient Mariner*) and a calendar with all the dates torn out after September 16, the day on which Harrington died.

Dunning's own experiences become equally bizarre. During a ride on a demolition train, he notices a conspicuous advertisement misidentifying John Harrington, whose "life allowed," it reads, was three months. However, a subsequent attempt by Dunning to trace by what means it was placed there climaxes in the odd, mysterious disappearance. Harrington's name is once more brought before Dunning's attention, this time in the form of a letter passed to him on the street. At the Birch Museum, Dunning's research notes are "accidentally" spilled and a stout, clean-shaven stranger returns them from off of the floor.

Almost immediately, more strange things occur. Dunning's servants are mysteriously poisoned, leaving Dunning alone in his house. During the night, he is awakened by a slight noise from outside his bedchamber, finding nothing amiss upon investigating, he returns to his bed where his hand discovers "a mouth, with teeth, and with hair about it," lying beneath his pillow. Flashed to the safety of another room, he reenters there until morning when a search of his bedchamber reveals no trace of the previous night's horror.

Eventually, Dunning and Henry Harrington discover a parchment bearing runes in Dunning's portfolio, identical to the one received by Henry's brother and obviously slipped into Dunning's rucksack at the Museum. The two men make plans to secretly return the runes to Karwell, aware that by doing so they will alter the curse. Although Karwell does not move from the security of his home at Lufford Hall until almost the last moment, Henry learns of Karwell's intention to leave on a Thursday evening via boat train. The two men follow the alchemist aboard the train and, once seated in the same compartment as Karwell, the disguised Dunning manages to conceal the runes in Karwell's ticket case and therefore pass the runes back to their original owner without his knowing it.

The decade of the fifties and, especially, the late fifties, saw the production of a quantity of fantasy-horror films unparalleled since the early thirties. Unfortunately, the major portion of fifties product seemed decidedly cliché and quite dull in comparison to the fresh and exciting productions of the earlier years. The return to the "classical" monster theme initiated in 1957 with *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* was an improvement but, for the most part, the horror films made during this period (unlike the science fiction films) were consistently uninspired and lifeless. The titles include *BACK FROM THE DEAD*, *BLOOD OF DRACULA*, *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF*, *I WAS A TEENAGE FRANKENSTEIN*, *THE MAN WHO TURNED TO STONE*, *THE VAMPIRE*, *THE UNEARTHLY*, *VOODOO ISLAND*, *VOODOO WOMAN*, *THE SHE CREATURE*, *CAT GIRL*, *DAUGHTER OF DR. JEKYLL*, *THE THING THAT COULDN'T DIE*, *ZOMBIES OF MORA TAU*, *TERROR IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE*, and a host of others. It was still a time when 90% of the horror films in release were shot in black and white and generally shuttled rapidly off to small town theatres or drive-in circuits on double bills. Although a few films were able to stand out because of their attempts to rise above the crowd, for every *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* or *HORROR OF DRACULA* there were at least a dozen more resembling *FROM HELL IT CAME* or *THE PHAROS OF THE CURSE*. It was during this liberal deluge of low quality product that *CURSE OF THE DEMON* was filmed and released.

CURSE OF THE DEMON is that rare kind of film that sums up what is best in the fantasy film genre while avoiding the conventions and clichés that define and restrict it. Like Don Siegel's *INVASION OF THE BODY SNATCHERS*, Jacques Tourneur's film is superbly written and constructed, though masquerading under a rather crude title chosen for its supposed marketability. As was the case with Siegel's film, *CURSE OF THE DEMON* was severely tampered with both during and after production. Yet, what survives is still arguably the finest cinematic exercise in the supernatural ever filmed. Had we received it in its unadulterated form, *CURSE OF THE DEMON* might well have been regarded as the most masterful and subtle of all horror films.

The literary source for the picture was Montague R. James' short story, "Getting the Runes," which the author included in his 1911 anthology, *More Ghost Stories*. In brief, it is a delicately written piece in which the supernatural

Karwell leaves the train to connect with his boat. After boarding the gangway, he is momentarily stopped by the voice of the ticket collector, who requires if the other gentleman has shown him a ticket.

"What the devil do you mean by the other gentleman?" snarls Karwell, who continues to walk on.

"I'd be a dog with you or what?" the puzzled ticket agent asks his co-worker. "Fanny thing. I could do worse 'n' wait!" alone."

Edward and Henry decide to give Karwell an opportunity to avert his own destruction by wiring ahead to Karwell's proposed destination advising him to check his ticket case.

"It is not clear whether these reached their destination, or whether, if they did, they were understood. All that is known is that, on the afternoon of the 23rd, an English traveler, examining the front of St. Wallace's Church at Abernethy, was struck on the head and instantly killed by a stone falling from the scaffold erected round the north-western tower, there being, as was clearly proved, no workman on the scaffold at that moment, and the traveler's papers identified him as Mr. Karwell."

"Casting the Runes" was filmed in Great Britain in 1967 by Sabre Film Productions and was distributed there by Columbia as NIGHT OF THE DEMON, and in America as CURSE OF THE DEMON, illustrating once again (as in the case of NIGHT OF THE EAGLE being changed to BURN, WITCH, BURN or Hammer's DRACULA becoming HORROR OF DRACULA) that distributors occasionally believed that British films needed more sensational titles for their American promotional campaigns.

The original screenplay of CURSE OF THE DEMON was written by Charles Bennett, who, many years before, had worked on several of Hitchcock's early films (i.e., BLACKMAIL, THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH, THE THIRTY-NINE STEPS, SECRET AGENT, SABOTAGE, YOUNG AND INNOCENT and FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT). With this experience in thrillers behind him, Bennett seemed an ideal choice to adapt the James story to the screen. Among the many gifted technicians who joined Bennett and Tourneur on the production were cinematographer Ted Searle (THE LIFE AND DEATH OF COLONEL BLIMP, the 1945 CAESAR AND CLOPATRA, THE DIRTY DOZEN, etc.); composer Glynis Parker (the 1960 TREASURE ISLAND, HELL BELOW ZERO, SINK THE BISMARCK, Hammer's SCREAM OF FEAR, etc.); editor Michael Gordon (whose American directorial credits include ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST, AN ACT OF MURDER and the 1990 version of CYRANO DE BERGERAC); Ken Adam, the film's production designer, who would later distinguish himself in the same capacity on the phenomenally successful James Bond vehicles; and Wally Pfister who, along with George Blackwell and S. D. Owens, worked on the production's special effects. Viewers would later assist with the effects developed for the greatest of all effects films, Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY.

For his leading man, Tourneur turned to Dana Andrews, a close friend with whom he had worked eleven years prior in a Universal-International western entitled CANYON PASSAGE; the two would also be almost immediately reunited in Tourneur's next production, THE FEARMAKERS, a 1968 Columbia melodrama about Communists infiltrating a Washington, D.C. advertising agency. In CURSE OF THE DEMON, Andrews was cast as Dr. John Holden, Charles Bennett's screen adaptation of the character of Edward Dunning. Instead of two brothers—John and Henry Harrington—the final script retained only the character of Henry, and it is the character, rather than John as in the story, who is destroyed by the demon Karwell sent against him. Bennett devised an entirely new major character in Joanna Harrington, Henry Harrington's niece, obviously with the intention of giving the film version a love interest. Joanna was portrayed by Peggy Cummins, an Irish actress who had appeared in THE LATE GEORGE APPLEBY and MOSS ROSE, as well as several other generally undistinguished films.

In the key role of Julian Karwell, Tourneur was extremely fortunate in retaining the services of another Irish performer, Naill MacGinnis. MacGinnis had previously been seen in ANNA KARENINA, Oliver's version of HAMLET and HENRY V, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, and had been internationally acclaimed in the title role of MAINTIN LUTHER, inelegantly depicted by producers in the two previous films who showcased again in TARZAN'S GREATEST ADVENTURE. His other fantasy film appearances included the role of Zeus in JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS, and very insignificant roles in Hammer's THE VIKING QUEEN and Amicus' TORTURE GARDEN. MacGinnis' physical build perfectly suited James' "tough" alchemist, and a definite improvement over the original "clean-shaven." Karwell was MacGinnis' small beard which more than suggested a touch of the Devil lurking within.

Bennett's first draft was titled THE HAUNTED and it remained faithful to the M. R. James story in attitude if not in specifics although the finished production does not mirror this delicate adaptation of the original.

Henry Harrington, a British professor who is leading an ongoing investigation into the activities of Julian Karwell's devil cult, drives through the night to Karwell's country estate at Leiford Hall to explore Karwell's life the more he has learned upon him for intruding upon his efforts. Karwell seemingly agrees to Harrington's pleas and, upon this assurance, Harrington returns home. But, precisely as the hour the cult leader predicted he would perish, a huge fire destroys materials to clear Harrington for its victim.

John Holden, an American physicist and a friend of Leiford Hall and Harrington in his upcoming scope of Karwell's cult. Almost immediately, Holden is contacted by Karwell who politely asks him to drop his investigation. When Holden refuses, Karwell signs him a parchment with occult symbols on it, which allows Holden four days before he, too, will meet an untimely death.

Holden comes into contact with the devil professor's niece, Joanna Harrington, who attempts to change his attitude of suspicion into one of sympathy. Holden discovers the parchment Karwell had given him is based upon the construction of forces working on his skepticism. Karwell's continual demonstrations of his otherworldly powers, Karwell's mother's efforts to thwart her son's plan by attempting to give Holden the information which will save his life, and Joanna's love combined with the information contained in her dead uncle's diary.

Eventually, after talking to Rand Holbert, a former Karwell cult member who confesses what after Holden shows him the parchment Karwell has signed him, Holden becomes convinced in the evidence of the supernatural. Learning of Karwell's attempt to flee by train, Holden catches up with the devil workman and manages to slip the runes back to their original owner just before his own "time allowed" is up. Thus, at the appointed hour of Holden's death, it is Karwell who is destroyed by the forces he has created.

Charles Bennett and Jacques Tourneur had hoped to devise a film which would be a logical successor to the film Tourneur and producer Val Lewton



TOP: The skeptical John Holden (Dana Andrews) begins to believe in the powers of the supernatural after he compares the parchment's magic symbols to those depicted on Stonehenge. In reality, there are no runes on Stonehenge. ABOVE: Andrews and Peggy Cummins pose for a publicity portrait.

had made in the forties. There is scarcely any need to elaborate on the works of either Lewton or Tourneur; both are universally regarded as specialists in the suggestion of horror. The most outstanding and brilliant sequences in the "B" horror vehicles they jointly made for RKO—CAT PEOPLE (1942), I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE (1943), and THE LEOPARD MAN (1943)—were entirely the result of implication, the subsequent feeling of terror being projected by the audience onto the screen. As superbly constructed as individual scenes in these three films are, the wholes are less than perfect. CAT PEOPLE suffers through unconvincing characterizations and poor dynamics, although the story in itself is vastly appealing. Notwithstanding, the superior sequences—Jane Randolph trapped in an indoor swimming pool or followed across the Central Park transients by an unseen "It"—are matches. I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE, the most subtle and artistic of the trio, suffered somewhat by being a film constructed around its title. Everyone has read and re-read that it actually became a retelling of Bronte's Jane Eyre in voodoo circumstances but Lewton's brilliant conception coupled with Tourneur's sensitive management of the material allow its best passages to become wordless poetic visions which override the film's trilling flaws and, as Joel Sigel observes in Val Lewton: The Revolver of Terror, permit the final result to transcend the genre. The last film, THE LEOPARD MAN, presents a story which is, in itself, a rather standard murder mystery; it is only the terrors of the actual murder, related through shadow and suggestion, that are genuinely memorable.

Joel Sigel relates how CAT PEOPLE was nearly ruined by RKO executive Lou Ostrow's insistence on showing the cat in the climactic scene where Kent Smith and Jane Randolph are trapped by the panther form of Simone Simon. In her original version just before his own "time allowed" is up. Thus, at the appointed hour of Holden's death, it is Karwell who is destroyed by the forces he has created.

The mentality of producers and executives such as Ostrow and Sid Rogell (another RKO producer who once told Lewton to give a character a butler because it would give the picture more class) is something that continually plagued both Lewton and Tourneur throughout their careers. In the person of Hal E. Chester, the executive producer of CURSE OF THE DEMON, Tourneur found a man who was more than a match for the story of Ostrow and Rogell (Frank Bevis is credited as the film's producer, although he seemingly exerted far less control than did Chester. Bevis' name was dropped from American publicity material which listed Chester as producer, although the film's credits give the original billing). Speaking with Joel Siegel, the director recalled the filming of the production's dynamic wing sequence

"We had four airplanes without wings from World War II. We tied them down and covered up the motors. Then we got trucks and filled them with dead horses. For each take, we'd put a truck in front of three planes and the horses would take off and the wind would make the rather gaudy harness across the lawn. I loved it. But I had to fight. The producer only wanted to take one take. I said, 'Well, if it was me, it was expensive to dig up those old airplanes out of the hangars, take the wings off, tie them down and run them up.'"

Dave Andrews came to Tourneur's defense in regard to the director's dealings with Chester:

"This guy, a fellow by the name of Hal Chester, was the producer. He was one of the 'Dead End Kids' and he's a real little asshole. He really is a horrible little fellow. I didn't get along with him at all. He would come up and start talking jagged lines to direct the picture. Jacques would say, 'Now, now, Hal, try to be nice. But I just said, 'Look, you're a little asshole. You said you were going to direct this picture?' I didn't come all the way over here to have the producer tell me what he thinks about directing the picture. I came because Mr. Tourneur asked me. So the director directed the picture."

It is amusing to consider the two schools of thought in conflict here. Tourneur, trained by Lewton in the eloquence of suggestion, and former "Dead End Kid" Chester, geared to the type of filmmaking responsible for such Monogram programmes as SPOOKS RUN WILD and GHOSTS ON THE LOOSE. If Tourneur's consideration of the film evidenced some reverence for Val Lewton's technique, then Chester's attitude is quite of whatever he may have done (or not done) in his role of producer for THE BEAST FROM 20,000 FATHOMS—pays at least some unintentional homage to "Jungle Sam" Katman, the erstwhile producer of the above named "Estate Comedies". Not only did Tourneur have to continually battle Chester for the proper facilities with which to make his picture, but he was constantly forced to compromise as well. Originally, the film was planned without a visual demon, save the cloud which pursued Andrews through the woods. When Chester insisted upon a demon, one was constructed resembling a woodcut illustration which is glimpsed in one scene. After Tourneur completed the picture, apparently compromising during the shooting by including the demon at the film's climax, Chester went back and placed the demon in the opening reel as well. The result, of course, is not unlike delivering the punchline to an excellent joke before the joke can be told. Most newspaper ads and poster artwork prominently displayed the demon, further telegraphing what should have been a surprise.

The finished film, including the demon sequences placed there under Chester's direction, ran nearly ninety-six minutes. But in order to play the film off on a double-bill, approximately thirteen minutes of footage were cut, including some exceptionally enlightening and important scenes which aided in defining the characters of both Karwell and his mother. Not satisfied even then, Chester had the scene in which Holden hears the footsteps of the unseen demon approaching him in a hotel corridor, re-filmed so that it now appears immediately after Holden encounters Karwell at the British Museum. Originally, it was planned that it would follow after Holden's visit to Lufford Hall, Karwell's estate. By this alteration, even more of Tourneur's carefully structured suspense was named. Charles Bennett was upset with Chester's interference with his original work that he demanded, unsuccessfully, to have his name removed from the credits. It was Chester who now finally "compromised". Bennett's name was retained on the film, and Hal Chester gave himself a credit as co-scripter, thus adding insult to injury in the purest sense of the definition.

As indicated by the British release script for NIGHT OF THE DEMON, the final cut was 8,582 feet in length, but below this notation on the script's title page has been added in an all different type: UK Release Print: 7,350 ft. The only logic imaginable for this trimming (and this may have been upon Columbia's insistence as distributor, rather than Chester's) would be to allow the picture to fit more comfortably into a double-bill program, which is precisely what occurred in both England and the United States. In this country, the film was released in February of 1958, with the pre-release combo ads giving it top billing over its proposed co-film, THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY OF LYNN STUART. The ad lines proclaimed, "DOUBLE TROUBLE FEATURE SHOW: Creatures of the other world! . . . Creatures of the under-world!" When this double-bill understandably failed to ignite the nation's box offices, Columbia tried to combine the film with other features, eventually placing it with Hammer's more prestigious THE REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN. However, in spite of generally favorable reviews, CURSE OF THE DEMON did little better at the box office than any of the other horror programmes it competed against at the time. Not that it would have mattered much anyway, financially speaking, for Columbia suffered one of its worst fiscal years during 1958.

The cuts inflicted upon CURSE OF THE DEMON began almost as soon as the film opens. The first is perhaps the only one which could be considered skillfully handled. As the film now stands, the pre-credit narration set against the ruins of Stonehenge finishes strongly with the statement, "... and it is also said, 'Man using the magic power of the ancient magic symbols can call forth these powers of darkness . . . the demons of hell.'". In the original version, the narration continues on, "Through the ages men have feared and worshipped these creatures . . . The practice of witchcraft, the cults of evil, have endured and exist to this day." An acceptable cut by most standards, since it allows Clifton Parker's music an exceptionally fine score throughout the entire film, to build and eventually climax upon the words, "the demons of hell," providing an excellent lead-in to the title.

Some of the introductory scenes featuring Holden and Joanna Harrington on the plane were cut, including a stewardess (Lynn Tracy), who is given credit on the film's final cast listing. The sequence directed was one in which Joanna, knowing she is disturbing Holden, gets up from her seat. Joanna originally speaks to the stewardess to see if there isn't another seat she can move to so her writing won't further disturb Holden. When the air hostess replies that there are no vacant seats, Joanna is once again forced to disrupt Holden's efforts to sleep by replying her seat.

Some of the dialogue at the airport between Holden and British reporters was also eliminated, including one notable exchange which would have fit nicely into the texture of the film. One reporter remarks to Holden, "Take it easy on our ghosts. We English are sort of fond of them," with Holden's reply being typically American and sarcastic, "Sure, some of my best friends are ghosts."

At the hotel when Joanna reads from her uncle's diary, another important line is cut. Holden remarks that he feels cold, but the girl does not share his discomfort in the least. Added meaning stresses this particular feeling of Holden's as Joanna says, of the diary, "There's a lot more about seeing visions of a monstrous, smoky shape and of feeling cold . . . like you said you were." Other lesser portions of the dialogue in the scene were slotted, but this line is important both for explanation and added suspense.

M. R. James purposely left the character of Karwell undefined and mysterious. This device works well in a short story the scope and length of "Casting the Runes," but Bennett obviously realized that it just wouldn't do for a feature-length film since audience interest would dissipate if too little was known of him. As written by Bennett and expertly enacted by Null MacGrinn, Julian Karwell is one of the most gentlemanly exponents of evil the cinema has given us, similar to some of the complex Hitchcock villains. Karwell is replete with a host of personal idiosyncrasies including a particularly Oedipal attachment to his mother (played equally well by Athene Seyler) that is also reminiscent of Hitchcock's work. Little of this survives in the existing prints, however, since many of these sequences were cut.

Following the cyclones at the children's party, Karwell tells Holden to give up the investigation or die on Thursday night at ten o'clock. "The choice is yours," he tells him. At this point in the film there originally existed a sequence where Karwell's mother shows Joanna the old book, The True Discoveries of the Witches and Demons (it has already been implied that Karwell has stolen this book from the British Museum), and is reprimanded by Julian for it. It is an interesting scene as it gives us an early indication that Mrs. Karwell is really attempting to help Holden, as well as offering Julian the opportunity to clarify his motives.

REEL FOUR (cont.)

No. ACTION

CUT TO:

43. INT. STUDY, LUFFORD HALL

M.C. 25. JOANNA & MRS.

KARWELL looking through a

large book

"NIGHT OF THE DEMON"

SOUND

CUT TO:

M.C. 25. JOANNA & MRS.

KARWELL looking through a

large book

MRS. KARWELL

I don't know if the diagrams are

of any use to you, dear, but you

see the words make no sense at

all.

JOANNA

What kind of language is this?

MRS. KARWELL

I really don't know

KARWELL

I didn't know that you were

interested in the black arts, Mrs

Harrington.

MRS. KARWELL

She wanted to see the book

which you and Dr. Holden were

discussing, didn't you, dear? But

we can't read a word, can we,

dear?

KARWELL

What especially interests you?

JOANNA

The power of the magic symbols.

KARWELL

Oh, undoubtedly the answer to

your question lies in that re-

markable work. Unfortunately,

it's unreadable. It's written

entirely in cipher.

JOANNA

You offered to lend it to Dr.

Holden. Shall I take it to him?

KARWELL

He also knows it would be

unreadable without a word key.

KARWELL turns away

CUT TO:



LEFT: Snug and confident, Holt listens as Karswell (Hail McLaughlin) predicts that Holt will die on the 28th of that month. RIGHT: Still disinclined, Holt watches calmly as a medium (Reginald Beckwith) utters a warning in the voice of Benny Harrington.

44. M.S. KARSWELL past JOANNA & MRS. KARSWELL in f.g. Camera tracks to as he walks to the window in b.g., excluding Joanna and Mrs. Karswell from shot.

He turns and looks off-screen to Joanna.

CUT TO:

45. M.S. JOANNA and MRS. KARSWELL
CUT TO:

46. M.S. KARSWELL

CUT TO:

47. M.S. JOANNA & MRS. KARSWELL

MRS. KARSWELL glances off-screen towards Karswell.

CUT TO:

48. M.S. KARSWELL, watching them.

CUT TO:

49. M.S. JOANNA & MRS. KARSWELL

JOANNA glances off-screen towards Karswell.

CUT TO:

50. M.S. KARSWELL, watching. He doesn't answer.

CUT TO:

51. M.S. JOANNA & MRS. KARSWELL JOANNA turns and walks away through the open door. MRS. KARSWELL watches her go, then turns to Karswell off-screen.

CUT TO:

52. M.C.S. KARSWELL, silent.

CUT TO:

53. M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL

CUT TO:

54. M.S. KARSWELL

KARSWELL

The storm is ended, I'm sure you and the doctor are anxious to return to London

JOANNA

Yes. You mean the party's over?

KARSWELL

You'll find him in the morning room where I left him ... waiting

MRS. KARSWELL

Well, goodbye, my dear. I'll see ...

JOANNA

Yes. Thank you.

Goodbye.

MRS. KARSWELL

It was a lovely party, wasn't it? Except for that dreadful wind.

MRS. KARSWELL

Have I done something wrong?

KARSWELL

Yes, mother.

He moves forward, Camera tracking back.

MRS. KARSWELL enters shot and moves toward chair.

She sits in the chair.

KARSWELL leans over the chair.

CUT TO:

55. M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL past KARSWELL in f.g.

CUT TO:

56. M.C.S. KARSWELL past MRS. KARSWELL in f.g.

CUT TO:

57. M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL past KARSWELL in f.g.

CUT TO:

58. M.C.S. KARSWELL past MRS. KARSWELL in f.g.

KARSWELL moves away.

CUT TO:

59. M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL as KARSWELL leaves. She looks after him, then Camera pans down on to open book lying on table, showing the Demon picture on one page

On set down.

MRS. KARSWELL

I only wanted to show her your books. I know how proud you are of them.

KARSWELL

Yes, I know. Listen, mother....

KARSWELL

You believe in the supernatural. I've shown you some of its power

MUSIC IN

and some of its danger

MRS. KARSWELL

Yes, Julian.

MUSIC CONTINUES

KARSWELL

Then believe this also. You get nothing for nothing. This house, the land, the way we live... nothing for nothing. My followers, who pay for all this, do it out of fear. And I do what I do out of fear also. That's part of the price

MRS. KARSWELL

But if it makes you unhappy, stop it. Give it back

KARSWELL

How can you give back life? I can't stop it. I can't give it back.

KARSWELL (cont.)

I can't let anyone destroy this thing. I must protect myself. If it is not someone else's life it will be mine. You understand, mother? It will be mine...

MUSIC OUT

Through this dialogue, Karswell becomes something of a tragic and even



LEFT: Holden, becoming more and more convinced that an unseen danger awaits him, hypnotizes and Robert (Brian Wilde) and learns the secret of the parchment. RIGHT: Completely convinced that "something horrible will happen at ten o'clock," Holden confronts Karwell on the train.

semi-sympathetic figure possessing a unique set of problems. Using witchcraft, he has acquired both power and wealth, a dramatic change of caste for him. He is not the Karwell of the short story, a man who unhesitatingly slips the parchment to Dunning simply because the man has rejected a paper Karwell had submitted to a scientific colony. The Julian Karwell of the film is a man who stands to be proven guilty of crimes through his leadership in the devil cult, a man whose previous murders and dire undertakings may eventually be traced back to him. If the scientific investigation Holden is conducting is successful in its revelations. At the very least, he stands to lose some of the power he holds over the cult followers who provide him with his immense wealth. And it is implied that he, himself, is fearful of the great power he commands. But in spite of everything he has to lose, Karwell does not simply pass the runes to Holden without giving him a chance to drop the investigation, attempting to talk Holden out of going any further during their meeting in the British Museum. However, one of the film's most important cuts came directly before Holden is approached by Karwell in the Museum. Holden receives a phone call in his hotel room (almost immediately after his associate, Kumar, has told Holden that he believes in devils and demons—"absolutely"). Karwell introduces himself and suggests that Holden have some "second thoughts" about the investigation and to mind his own business. Karwell continues, "Harrington agreed to this. I think out of respect for him you might do the same." When Holden refuses, Karwell rings off after delivering an ominous warning, "That's unfortunate. Maybe for both of us."

This last line indicates that Karwell realizes he must now deal with Holden as he has dealt with Harrington and, prior to that, with Hobart, although he undoubtedly prefers not to harm the American. His appearance at the children's party in tailored clothes and clown make-up establishes three important points in one ingeniously succinct stroke.

"I used to make my living like this years ago," he informs Holden. "You see before you Doctor Bobo the Magnificent!" Imagine this man touring the British Music Halls, performing a routine magic show for meager wages, retiring each night to a seedy hotel room, which is the picture this dialogue most certainly implies. This self-description of Karwell's early life provides an enormous contrast to the position of comfort and security he presently and spiritual blackmail have obtained. Coupled with his immense selfishness, it is easy to see why he won't "give it back."

Secondly, this guise of innocence and good creates a chilling counterpart to the evil of which we know Karwell to be capable. It is an extrapolation of Lon Chaney's theory about "The Clown At Midnight"—take an amusing figure like a clown and stick him out in the moonlight at the witching hour, and his painted face and wimpy smile will take on a deadly sinister quality. The ironic contrast the situation creates appears to be dear to both Tourneur and Charles Bennett, though Dana Andrews attributes its presence in CURSE OF THE DEMON to its writer. Tourneur had previously included a scene in BERLIN EXPRESS (1948) in which a clown, fatally shot, continues his nightclub act even though his amused audience does not see what he do, the blood seeping through his costume. In the script Bennett wrote for television's THE WILD, WILD WEST entitled "The Night of the Eccentrics," Count Montepi (Victor Buono), one of the show's more interesting recurring villains, appears in the opening scenes in tattered tails, top hat and clown make-up remarkably approximating MacGinnis, and in this innocent guise spirits James West into an elaborate trap.

Thirdly, Karwell's clown appearance establishes his great affection for children and, on this point, Bennett has created a completely different character from Karwell's homeland. One of the story's choicest passages describes a party the latter Karwell holds for the school children, evidencing anything but affection for them:

[Karwell] wrote to the clergymen of his parish . . . and offered to show the school children some magnificent dolls . . . the clergymen was rather



surprised, because Karwell had shown himself to be rather unpleasant to the children—complaining of their trespassing, or something of the sort . . . All the dolls he showed were most queer . . . absolutely realistic . . . At last he produced a series which represented a little boy passing through his own park—Lufford, I mean—in the evening. Every child in the room could recognize the place from the pictures. And this poor boy was followed, and at last pursued and overtaken, and either torn in pieces or somehow made away with, by a horrible hopping creature in white, which you saw first dawning about among the trees, and gradually it appeared more and more plainly . . . what it must have meant to the children doesn't bear thinking of!"

At Charles Bennett's party, "Doctor Bobo" is happily spending his Halloween Day afternoon entertaining the children (in what he remarks is an annual affair) with a variety of magic tricks. The mere fact that his neighbors allow their children to attend may be another reason why Karwell asks for nothing more than "privacy for myself and my followers." He genuinely wishes to maintain this relationship with the village children if only to provide a link with his own past. While walking with Holden about the grounds he speaks glowingly of the children, "If only we grown-ups could preserve their capacity for simple joys and simple belief." Further on, the men come upon two children playing "Snakes and Ladders" (the American equivalent being "Shoots and Ladders"). Karwell reveals, "Funny thing . . . I always preferred sliding down the snakes to climbing up the ladders. You're a doctor of psychology—you ought to know the answer to that!" Holden counters, "Maybe you're a good loser," to which Karwell quietly though emphatically replies, "I'm not, you know. Not a bit."

Karwell's mother, in another deleted party scene, tells Joanna, "I hope you don't mind children's parties my dear. Julian's so fond of children. He really ought to be married, but he's so fussy. Oh, you aren't married, are you?" she queries, as if with the hope of getting Joanna together with her son. Joanna replies that she is not, but Mother's comments have flustered Julian who meekly protests, "Oh, mother, mother. . . ." Apart from the blatant Montini, the scene is tinged with homosexual overtones which may account for its deletion. Still, it seems trivial and silly, since the dialogue is sufficiently subtle and many Hitchcock films (STRANGERS ON A TRAIN and ROPE most immediately come to mind as examples) contain similar material that is much more obvious yet which got past both British and American censors.

Mrs. Karwell appears to be Julian's only social contact. We see them playing cards together, albeit briefly, in the first reel as Harrington arrives to plead for his life (the scene was originally a few moments longer and clearer, with Mrs. Karwell stating her game hand, "Fifteen . . . two and three make five. . ."), at the party she is ably assisting the proceedings by dishing out her home-made ice cream. The deleted conversation at the party is the first indication we have that relationships between mother and son are strained, along with the suggestion that she wishes to help the American. The staged scene with Mr. Meek is another well-intentioned ploy to convince Holden to cease his research into the devil cult's activities. After several "guides" speak through Mr. Meek's lips (one, a little girl who crows, "Oh mommy . . . I can't find Fredrick") was another brief sequence immediately preceding Harrington's voice which was inaudibly extended, the voice of Joanna's uncle comes through warning her that Holden must give up the investigation.

"Karwell has the key," says the voice, "He's translated the old book. The answer is there!" Disgusted, Holden leaves with Joanna, feeling everything has been staged by Karwell for his benefit, when in actuality the way to Holden's salvation has been revealed for him. Mrs. Karwell runs after them, imploring them to believe "It was real! You must do as he says!" Karwell suddenly appears from his parked car, and Mrs. Karwell is genuinely surprised. "All right, Mother," he stops her, "Come along with me."

From this exchange we learn that Mrs. Karwell has been acting against Julian's wishes by trying to aid John Holden. She has committed a *faux pas* by revealing through Mr. Meek that Karwell has translated *The True Deconver-*

of the *Witcher and Demon*. This scene is well played but annoyingly unclear, as is Mrs. Karswell's last minute telephone call informing Holden that her son is fleeing for Southampton on the 8:45 train. Holden's associate, Kumar, relays the message to Holden at the film's climax: "She kept saying that all evil must end... but how could it?"

After first viewing the film one finds himself wondering why Mrs. Karswell would make such a call to Holden knowing full well that it could mean her son's death. The answer comes not only in the missing scene from reel four, but also in a telephone call thoughtlessly obliterated from reel eight. A shot of the ambulance conveying Rand Hobart to the lecture hall, its emergency bells ringing, originally dissolved to the telephone at Harrington House (the cut also deprives us of one of Tourneur's oft-used audio metaphor).

REEL EIGHT (cont.)

No. ACTION
38 INT. HALL HARRINGTON HOUSE NIGHT

L.S. as JOANNA comes out of living room towards telephone in lg. She picks up the receiver.

CUT TO:

39 INT. LUFFORD HALL NIGHT
M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL, speaking on telephone.

CUT TO:

40 INT. HALL HARRINGTON HOUSE
M.C.S. JOANNA on telephone.

CUT TO:

41 INT. HALL LUFFORD HALL
M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL on telephone.

'NIGHT OF THE DEMON'

SOUND

TELEPHONE RINGS

JOANNA

Hello? Oh yes, Mrs. Karswell.

MRS. KARSWELL

I've tried to get Mr. Holden all day. He won't take a call. I thought perhaps you could get through to him. Believe me, I was as much surprised by Julian's return last night as you were. I think I've found another way to help Mr. Holden.

JOANNA

I'm not certain that he needs help, and even if he does I'm quite sure that he doesn't want it from me.

MRS. KARSWELL

Oh, but you can't mean that.

KARSWELL appears on the landing in b.g. He starts to come slowly down the staircase.

MRS. KARSWELL glances over her shoulder and sees KARSWELL coming down the stairs.

She replaces the receiver and moves quickly towards the bottom of the staircase. She looks up at KARSWELL still coming down the last flight.

CUT TO:

42 M.C.S. MRS. KARSWELL

KARSWELL enters shot, reaching bottom of flight of stairs.

CUT TO:

43 M.S. KARSWELL moves away end out of shot. MRS. KARSWELL rests her head on banister and cries.

What these cuts clearly indicate is Mrs. Karswell's determination to thwart Julian even at the expense of his life; she knows he will not harm her physically, such is his love for her. She emerges as the film's wrong heroine rather than just an amusingly eccentric accomplice in her son's schemes, which the film now imparts. Her cheery humor so evident at the party and the source is stripped away by the urgency of her situation and revealed as a pose behind which Mrs. Karswell has been hiding her anxiety. In the moment when she rests her head on the banister and weeps, it is difficult not to be moved by her sacrifice in a personally painful and desperate decision.

In the following scene, Karswell abducts Joanna, and without the context provided by the foregoing dialogue, it is unclear as to why he does this

surely? You must listen to me. Someone else knows

MUSIC IN

MRS. KARSWELL (cont.)

knows the secret of the parchment. Tell him Rand Hobart knows. All this evil must end, Miss Harrington. It must end...

I must ring off now.

Julian...

MRS. KARSWELL (cont.)

...!

KARSWELL

Yes, mother?

MRS. KARSWELL

Please, Julian, try to understand...

KARSWELL

I'm afraid it's you who don't understand

Several views of the complex character of Julian Karswell as masterfully portrayed by Niall MacGinnis. LEFT: A true case of a clown at midnight, Greasepaint cannot hide the sinister aura surrounding Karswell. TOP RIGHT: An ingratiating Karswell meets Holden at the museum and passes him the deadly parchment. BOTTOM RIGHT: For reasons which are obscure in the final release print, Karswell abducts Joanna.



Karswell's act merely becomes a convenient way of accounting for Joanna's presence at the climax, rather than enhancing his determination to protect himself by preventing Joanna from reaching Holden with Mrs. Karswell's message.

Muri MacGinnis was especially aware of his character's defensiveness and insecurity. At the Museum, he fidgets with his hat held tight against his body while speaking to Holden; after summoning the cyclone at the party, he stands with his hands folded and pulled tightly across himself, on the train, as Holden attempts to pass the runes (through several runs), Karswell's arms are most deliberately folded and drawn close to his body to prevent anything from being given to him, although it is already revealed that a parchment has to be passed and the person has to take it without knowing. If Karswell had taken the runes knowingly, would the curse then have had the same effect? The viewer is probably expected to overlook this point during the climax.

This scene also provides a variation of the film's established framing. When the skeptical and unenlightened Holden is spoken to at the Museum and again at Lufford Hall, he occupies a seated position, allowing Karswell to loom over him and dominate the frame. On the train it is Karswell who is threatened as Holden gains the upper hand, keeping Karswell in a seated position and towering over him.

Indeed, the composition is particularly good throughout, with the "body language" of the characters establishing their attitudes in more than a few instances. Peggy Cummins is quite good when she explains to Holden about the notes in her uncle's diary. Fencing off one of his coy remarks, she stands looking down at the seated scribe. As the conversation becomes more serious, she sits on the settee next to him, finally submitting to a kneeling position in front of him. Visually, she has humbled herself before Holden in a moment of honesty and concern. True to Lewton's personal formula of defining his characters through their occupations, Joanna is a Kindergarten teacher and psychology major, indicating her intellect and, by contrast to Holden, her open-mindedness.

Ironically, drinking is the most often used blocking device in the picture. Holden obviously appreciates his liquor, and this on-screen habit sadly parallels the alcoholism that was plaguing Dana Andrews in his private life.

The visual literacy that Tourneur brings to bear on the dialogue sequences transforms them from being merely talk into meaningful exchanges between individuals. It is this literacy that made the key scenes of his Lewton films so memorable and memorable, and *CURSE OF THE DEMON* allows Tourneur, for the last time to date, to work his mystical poetry on a classic level.

In all his best genre pieces, the outstanding moments are irrelevant to the story at hand. Joel Siegel observes that the walk to the Roomfort in *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE* exists solely "for the sake of its own grace of movement."¹⁷ Pulsing drums establish a rhythm, and the entire sequence is told in a series of fluid tracking shots. This is Tourneur's favorite conceit: a journey through an unknown and dangerously dark world with the travelers in constant jeopardy until they reach safety on the other side. In *CAT PEOPLE*, it is the Central Park walk, metered by the staccato click of high heels on pavement, told again in a series of tracking shots cross-cutting from Jane Randolph to Simone Simon then back to Randolph. The meter changes as one set of high heels disappears. The rhythmic tapping of shoes again defines the transience during *Cic-Cio's* death in *THE LEOPARD MAN*, but it is the murder of the Delgado child that most closely fits the mold of the "dangerous journey."

In *CURSE OF THE DEMON*, John Holden must cross a forest to reach Karswell's manor house and, again, to leave it. This time the journey is in two parts. Getting there is disquieting though uneventful, but the return trip is filled with danger. In a night-for-night sequence (as meaningful to this film as studio exteriors were to *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*), Holden moves about through trees frighteningly modulated by an unearthly light. At first, his path is defined by light from Karswell's study. Holden proceeds, but the light is shut off, plunging his path into darkness. Holden glances behind him, then moves on. The twitting of a nightbird establishes a delicate rhythm which, along with the faint sound of crickets, amounts to an audible silence as he moves among the trees. The moon passes behind a bank of clouds, further obscuring his way. Suddenly, a fir branch springs up in his face—a "bus" equivalent to the train in *THE LEOPARD MAN* (or at the conclusion of *DEMON*) or the prophylactic but *CAT PEOPLE* from which the same sprang at part of Lewton's cinematic vocabulary. Our surprise is quelled when we recognize the object, but before we can recover fully the shrill music of Clifton Parker's violin tapers off into a fingering, off-key shriek, and the quiet beat rhythms are replaced by the sound of the invisible demon leaving scuffing footprints in the ground. Holden looks to the sky and sees a cloud of fire and smoke materializing. It gives chase, becoming larger as it pursues him in a scene perhaps inspired by the magic lantern slide shown from the short story. Holden flees from the supernatural specter, crashing through the brush and adding into the turf. He looks up helplessly at the fireball as it hovers over him, then dissolves back into the night as quickly as it appeared. The musical crescendo subsides and the forest is again silent, save for the twitting of the nightbirds.

This is Tourneur at his most powerful. The sequence is flawlessly photographed by Ted Searle, combined with Michael Gordon's editing and Parker's music, it easily matches the walk to the Roomfort in *I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE*, though on a different dynamic level.

The sequence preceding the forest chase, the one in which Holden stealthily makes his way through Lufford Hall to the study, is equipped with more than its share of "buses." Holden steps into a darkened hallway and makes his way down the stairs when a suddenly opened door floods the landing with moonlight. Unaware of this, Holden continues his descent. Parking at the bottom of the first flight, Holden looks behind him but sees nothing. He moves on, stops abruptly, a hand abruptly enters the frame to rest on the balustrade above him. At the bottom of the staircase, Holden again looks back but sees nothing. He reaches the study door, and the same hand is viewed at the bottom of the balustrade. But a view of the entire staircase, in



Three sequences cut from the finished prints of *CURSE OF THE DEMON*. TOP: Holden visits the Robert farm and is met by Percy Herbert. A long sequence in the farmhouse can be seen in the trailer, but not the film itself. MIDDLE: Mrs. Karswell (Athene Seyler) is surprised by her son as she shows Joanna the occult book. BOTTOM: Karswell tries to explode to his mother the extent of his involvement with the supernatural.

the next shot, reveals no one from Holden's point of view. Tourneur has successfully achieved a series of successful "buses" which also seem to illustrate Karswell's otherworldly menace by making him something of a phantom figure. This has been suggested earlier in the encounter at the British Museum, when Karswell's exit is unnaturally distorted, providing Holden, and us, with a visual cue that he is up against a man with supernatural powers.

The use of the distorted image to convey Holden's bewitchment is found again in another key sequence eliminated from the extant release print. Those who have seen the trailer prepared for *CURSE OF THE DEMON* may recognize a scene in the following exchanges that was included in the "coming attractions" but trimmed from theatrical prints. Two of the featured players in this sequence, Janet Barrow (Mrs. Hobart) and Percy Herbert (Farmer) can be



found listed in the final cast listing along with Lynn Tracy's deleted "Air Hostess."

REEL FIVE (cont.)

No. ACTION

"NIGHT OF THE DEMON"

SOUND

DISSOLVE TO:

59. EXT. LANE TO HOBART FARM, DAY.

L.S. towards Holden's car parked in the lane. HOLDEN gets out of the car and looks around. Camera pans with him along the lane, bring the Hobart Farm into shot in b.g.

CUT TO:

60. EXT. HOBART FARM.

M.L.S. FARMER digging in the garden. HOLDEN enters shot and the FARMER stops digging.

HOLDEN
Pardon me, is this the Hobart Farm?

The FARMER looks at HOLDEN, then moves away from Camera up the path towards the house. HOLDEN moves after him.

HOLDEN
Wait a minute. Is this the Hobart place?

The FARMER stops and turns around.

FARMER
Get off this property.

CUT TO:

61. M.S. HOLDEN

MUSIC CONTINUES
HOLDEN
All I'm trying to find out -

CUT TO:

62. M.S. FARMER

FARMER
You heard what I said. Get off.

CUT TO:

63. M.S. HOLDEN

HOLDEN
Look - they told me this was the Hobart farm. If it is, I've got to see Mrs. Hobart.

CUT TO:

64. M.L.S. towards farmhouse. HOLDEN and the FARMER face each other in the garden. The door of the house in b.g. opens and MRS. HOBART steps out.

MUSIC QUIZ

The FARMER walks up to her and they whisper together. She turns and goes back into the house, door closing behind her.

FARMER
All right. Come in.

HOLDEN walks up the pathway towards the house.

CUT TO:

65. M.S. towards the closed door. The FARMER pushes it open and stands aside for HOLDEN to enter. The FARMER closes the door behind HOLDEN and moves away out of shot to garden.

CUT:

END OF REEL FIVE

REEL SIX

No. ACTION

"NIGHT OF THE DEMON"

SOUND

1. INT. FARMHOUSE.

FULL SHOT. MRS. HOBART & 1ST ELDER are standing behind the table as HOLDEN enters in b.g. taking his hat off. THREE ELDERLY MEN come into the room from door in b.g.

MRS. HOBART
Sit you.

TOP TWO: Holden's bewitchment is conveyed through the use of distorted images, beginning after the meeting with Karswell in the museum and continuing later in Holden's hotel corridor. BOTTOM TWO: The Leeson/Journeux motif of a dangerous journey appears in CURSE OF THE DEMON as Holden's encounter with the demon in the forest.

The *Amphitruo*... *glance*... *one* of the *times*, *by* which the *demons* *came* *back* *to* *the* *shore* of the *present* *world*, *one* *is* *disappointed* *over* the *handling* of the *demons* *sequences*. *Indeed*, *many* *believe* *that* *the* *film* *would* *have* *been* *more* *effective* *if* *the* *demons* *had* *not* *been* *shown* *at* *all*.

HOLDEN moves towards table, camera tracking B, and sits down. MRS. HOBART sits down at the opposite side of the table.

TWO WOMEN and another MAN enter the scene from staircase b.g.

MRS. HOBART
What be it you want with us?

HOLDEN
Is Rand Hobart your son?

MRS. HOBART
He was my son

HOLDEN
You know he hasn't been proven to be the killer, Mrs. Hobart?

MRS. HOBART
Speak your business. I'm not interested in his guilt or want of guilt.

HOLDEN
Very well. I head a group of scientists who would like to examine him and try to find out what it was that drove him out of his mind.

1ST ELDER
We know what it was. Let him be.

MRS. HOBART
Let him die.

HOLDEN
You know for a fact that he was the murderer?

1ST ELDER
He made the killing happen.

2ND ELDER
It was he that were chosen, and he passed it to a brother.

3RD ELDER
The time will come when those who have no true belief will be scourged.

MRS. HOBART
What do you want to do with him?

HOLDEN
The authorities say that I'll have to have the written permission.

HOLDEN (cont.)
- of the next of kin before he can be released to us. So I was hoping that you might sign this release paper, Mrs. Hobart.

MRS. HOBART
What will this examination do?

HOLDEN
Well, we hope that under hypnosis - that's a special technique we have - we'll be able to find out what he did and saw at the time of the killing.

HOLDEN
You say it was a brother who died. I didn't realize it was one of the family.

MRS. HOBART
A brother in the faith. A true

CUT TO:

2. M.C.S. 1ST ELDER

CUT TO:

3. M.S. GROUP MRS. HOBART and THREE MEN.

CUT TO:

4. M.C.S. HOLDEN

CUT TO:

5. FULL SHOT as HOLDEN rises and puts the form and a pen on the table in front of MRS. HOBART, camera tracking with him.

CUT TO:

6. M.C.S. HOLDEN

CUT TO:

7. M.S. GROUP MRS. HOBART and THREE MEN.





Of course Parker's fascinating score for the film, *CURSE OF THE DEMON*, is built in the shape of a somewhat meretricious love poem. Parker has achieved the use of leitmotifs in a basic for the score, giving us varied a group of gradually building mood themes which reflect the main characters' growing attitudes as the film proceeds. The music for the pre-credit narration sequence and the main titles sets in a sort of miniature overture for the total score, each section of the "overture" containing the musical building blocks that will shape the completed composition.

Within the bounds of these mood pieces, Parker has also chosen to do a bit of musical experimentation in the score illustrating the presence of demons, he has composed music to be played (as in the sequence of Holden's flight through the woods near Karwell's home), and with the volume sustaining their highest register, and

shortly after, the tubas sustaining their lowest register. The orchestration is fairly standard, Parker employs a medium-sized symphony orchestra, supplemented by piano, with the weight of the demonic scenes falling upon the strings and woodwinds. One other place for Parker is his limited use of "brash chords," a rather cheap device in which the full orchestra surges in the audience with the full volume of the composer's musical "expression."

The single really identifiable theme in the film is the six-note, two-part "devil theme" that appears at regular intervals throughout. The theme, surprisingly enough, is composed for the key of "D" ("D" for Demon, what else!) and is set into a terrific two descending two descending opening which one might characterize as illustrating the power of the "Dark Forces," mainly through its basic descending nature and the fact that it inevitably appears each time Holden's faith in the "real and the touchable" is shaken, and the less-than-happy two-note descending conclusion to this theme, a descending second note illustrating the inevitable end of the slopes of the demon's attack. The theme recurs each time Karwell employs some magical device to aid in breaking down the skeletons of Holden. Several examples: the initial passing of the parchment to Holden in the British Museum—Parker has the theme played twangily on a single reed, Holden's failure to find the writing on Karwell's personal card, the examination of the Runic writing at Stonehenge. Each time, Holden is left grating on straw, and each time the theme is played with increasing strength.

An illustration of the structure of the entire score may be seen by discussing the previously mentioned "overture." The narration begins over an and, desolate-sounding piece of music meant to illustrate the

timeliness of the "power of the ancient Runic symbols." This music then segues directly into a powerful version of the "devil theme" as the narrator speaks of "the demons of hell." The main title begins immediately with a signed musical statement and a short reference to the wind demon Karwell with up at the Halloween party. The "devil theme" is then again played by the full orchestra, this time quickly retreating the four-note first section of the theme. The signed statement returns and is concluded with a "forward" four-note "demonic conclusion." Each one of these musical sections appears at least once throughout the film linked together by the "devil theme."

The most remarkable piece of music in the film, both from a standpoint of orchestration and mood, is the underscoring for the two physical, and two suggested appearances of the demon. In all four cases, the musical sequence is essentially the same. The sound effects begin with a kind of staccato squeaking noise indicating the sudden presence of the demon. At the same time Parker has the tubas off on a sustained note in their lowest register, followed by and continued with sustained flutes. The piano then plays the "devil theme," supplemented by a clarinet on the symbols. The flutes appear again and well off on or throughout the sequence, paired now by diaphanous levels on the tympani. A grotesque figure for the brass ends the sequence. It's as if after the fascinating combination of musical and musical "effects."

The final, overall effect of the score is to show the almost utter helplessness of the human being across the forces of darkness. Not one musical piece can be identified personally with any of the human characters involved. From beginning to end, it's the demon, in control of the music and the score.

<p>MRS. HOBART picks up the pen. CUT TO:</p>	<p>believer Not like him, I'll sign it, as you ask.</p>	<p>to Mrs Hobart CUT TO:</p>	<p>HOLDEN I've been chosen for what?</p>
<p>9. M.S. GROUP: MRS. HOBART and THREE MEN CUT TO:</p>	<p>1ST ELOER Why do you do this for him? 2ND ELOER What be it to us what they want?</p>	<p>18. FULL SHOT. GROUP from Holden's eyeline, as it becomes distorted and out of focus CUT TO:</p>	<p>HOLDEN What do you mean?</p>
<p>HOLDEN enters shot and takes the form and pen CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>19. M.C.S. HOLDEN CUT TO:</p>	<p>HOLDEN What do you mean?</p>
<p>HOLDEN looks round towards the door off-screen as he hears it being opened. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>20. FULL SHOT. GROUP from Holden's eyeline - still distorted CUT TO:</p>	<p>HOLDEN What do you mean?</p>
<p>10. M.S. towards door. The OLD MAN opens it and looks off-screen towards HOLDEN. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>21. M.C.S. HOLDEN. He looks off at the group, then down at the parchment in his hand. CUT TO:</p>	<p>HOLDEN What do you mean?</p>
<p>11. M.C.S. HOLDEN. He looks off towards door, then back at Mrs. Hobart off-screen. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>22. C.S. Parchment as Holden's hands fold it and put it into wallet. CUT TO:</p>	<p>HOLDEN What do you mean?</p>
<p>He turns away. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>23. M.C.S. HOLDEN. He puts the wallet in his pocket and walks out through the door. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let no arm be raised to defend him.</p>
<p>12. FULL SHOT as HOLDEN moves away from the table. He exits shot towards the door and Camilla holds on group watching him. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>24. FULL SHOT: GROUP - from Holden's eyeline. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let no arm be raised to defend him.</p>
<p>13. M.C.S. HOLDEN as he turns into shot putting his hat on. He stops and looks back at Mrs. Hobart and group o.s. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>25. M.C.S. HOLDEN as he comes out of door. He turns and looks back into room. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let no arm be raised to defend him.</p>
<p>He takes the wallet out of his pocket. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>The door is slammed in his face. He glances at the Runic symbols chalked on the door, then exits. DISSOLVE...</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let no arm be raised to defend him.</p>
<p>14. C.S. WALLET as Holden opens it. The parchment flies out. HOLDEN catches it. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>When Holden later meets Joanna before attending the séance he tells her that "after this afternoon I must confess there's a few things I don't understand." Without the benefit of the input from the confrontation with Mrs. Hobart, the following sequence filmed at Stonehenge lacks the added significance it otherwise definitely requires.</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let no arm be raised to defend him.</p>
<p>15. FULL SHOT. GROUP from Holden's eyeline: MRS. HOBART rises and points at Holden o.s. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>With all its mystical dialogue, the Hobart farm sequence provides another opportunity to confront Holden with the film's underlying premise, which Karwell terms "the fear of what is behind you," recalling the Coleridge quotation from the James story, cited as the film in Harrington's diary—"like one that on a lone road took dark walk in fear and dread... because he knows a frightful fiend doth close behind him tread." This premise was subverted through the inclusion of shots of the demon in both the opening reel and the finale so that the film's final line, "Maybe it's better not to know," lacks the planned impact. Hal Chester just did not realize, or care, that by showing us a heinous monster he was robbing the films of its "power of the mind." Lewton used to say that if you make the screen dark enough the audience will "populate [it] with more horrors than all the Hollywood horror writers could think of."</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>
<p>16. C.S. Parchment, quivering in Holden's hand. CUT TO:</p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>	<p>It is at this point that Tourneur and Bennett formulated the entire structure of <i>CURSE OF THE DEMON</i>. For, as previously stated, <i>CURSE OF</i></p>	<p>MRS. HOBART Let them all know what he saw</p>

THE DEMON is originally prepared not show the demon at all. Henry Harrington did not figure in the script, he is dead before the film begins. The story was revised, most of it by Tourneur and Chester, to include the opening scene with Harrington driving through the night to implore Karswell to stop the thing he's started. Although it appears that Tourneur has denied directing this sequence (in an interview appearing in *Mid-Minut Fantastique*, #12), it is probable that he may have meant he did not direct any of the shots utilizing the demon itself which were developed by George Blackwell and Wally Verrera and photographed by S. D. Denham.

Dana Andrews, in a recent interview, spoke about the planned climax to the picture:

"The end of the picture, where Matt MacDowell was actually killed - they had a fire in the house during a forest and lightning storm, and a tree caught the fire and killed him. We were rushing to save, and we stopped the tree at 'Maybe it's better not to know.' That was the end of the picture, and that's the way it should have been, to give your own conclusions. Was it real or just imagination? But then Hal Chester had to go back and put the device in, and there's no imagination left. It just reveals the texture of the picture."¹⁰

Karswell's death, by a falling tree certainly would bear greater significance, since it is foreshadowed at the party when a branch is sliced from a tree by a lightning bolt of Karswell's own initiation. The untenable distinction between reality and imagination, so carefully built for an hour and a half, is imperially damaged when laid out for us in black and white at the climax.

Tourneur himself commented on the demon in a recent interview:

"After I left, the producer put in a monster scene in the beginning. This only meant I did not - and this is how I wanted to do the whole thing - was the scene in the words where Dana Andrews is chased by a cloud. That's how I wanted to do the entire film."¹¹

But sometime during the production Tourneur evidently received orders from Chester to include a demon. So, obviously, Tourneur decided upon compromising.

"Then I arrived, at the very end, when the train goes by, to include only four frames of the monster coming up with the eye and showing his face. But after I returned to the United States, the English producer made this horrible thing, cheapened it. It was like a different film. But everything after that opening was as I had intended."¹²

The last statement of Tourneur's, "... everything after that opening was as I had intended" is somewhat puzzling, puzzling in that, in the earlier *Mid-Minut Fantastique* interview, Tourneur claimed that he had no part in the direction of any of the scenes featuring the demon. What apparently happened, if the latest quote by Tourneur can be taken as factual, is that during the production Tourneur tried to pull a fast one on his producer, much like he and Lewton had accomplished at RKO years before. When told to show the partner stacking Kent Smith and Jane Randolph in CAT PEOPLE, Lewton, Tourneur and editor Mark Robson filmed it so cleverly, so darkly, and edited it so precisely, that the studio was not sure what was exactly in attacking the couple (unfortunately, the transformation of cat to chester is not handled with such subtlety in CURSE OF THE DEMON). An attempt to pull the wool over Chester's eyes may have taken the form of the manner in which the demon sequences were filmed, as it seems apparent that both the opening and closing sequences were directed by Tourneur. The opening, particularly, is so skillfully developed and so consistent with Tourneur's unique style, that it seems inconceivable that he did not shoot the sequence himself, save the demon drive to Lufford Hall, the encounter between Harrington and Karswell and the clock signaling Harrington's visit. As all consistent with the Tourneur technique. There is a brief shot during the murder of Harrington which depicts a huge prop leg coming down next to the screaming victim. This particular shot is so different from the rest of the model work that it is possible that it represents Tourneur's compromise. The context of the statement "... everything after that opening was as I had intended," points to an admission of having directed the film's conclusion, although additional model work may have been edited in without his direct supervision or knowledge.

"And it's such a bad demon!" Dana Andrews is exasperated, and there is no doubt that Tourneur and a great many film buffs would agree. Ivan Butler (in his *Horror in the Cinema*) is concise in his disapproval, "... the devil, however, when he becomes visible, is less [effective]. Unseen demons are best." Carlos Clarens (writing in *An Illustrated History of the Horror Film*) is in accord with this viewpoint, but on an even more vacuous level, calling the shots of the demon at the very outset of the film "atrocious."

And yet, there have been respected authorities who have disagreed in part. Joel Siegel, certainly a proponent of the Lewton-Tourneur school of filmmaking, says, "Tourneur has said that showing the demon at the beginning of the film was an error, and he's right. It would have been saved for the very climax in which Karswell is torn apart by his own creation."¹³ And William K. Everson, in his recently published *Cinema of the Horror Film*, wrote "Luckily, its Demon is such a lulu that it lives up to the fearsome descriptions of it [amazing most movie monsters do not]. Between these four viewpoints comes a more neutral one from David Pirie (from *A Heritage of Horror: The English Gothic Cinema 1946-1992*) who feels that the reason why CURSE OF THE DEMON was hampered by its special effects was "not because they break any general aesthetic rules, but because the film was an exercise in a particular kind of horror, namely the Victorian ghost story. Properly incorporated into a film they could have worked quite well, but here they were simply imposed upon a carefully balanced structure and failed to mesh with it."

The authors of this article are in similar disagreement over the execution and utilization of the special effects in regard to the demon model work. MacQueen holds the opinion that Dana Andrews is correct in labeling the demon "bad," feeling the head used for close-ups is unconvincing, partly because of the rigidity of its movement and partly because there is a noticeable difference in the surrounding space between the exterior of the train station

at night-for night shot) and the closed, confined studio where the model was photographed under artificial light against a black velvet background. The full figure puppet controlled by wires might have worked if only it were not shown so distinctly. The long shots of it approaching in the distance are just vague enough to be passable, but when we see it reach down and pick up Karswell (an obvious doll), the demon is on-camera too long a duration at too close a range to achieve its desired effect.

Borst, on the other hand, tends to agree with the views of both Siegel and Everson, arguing that the demon effects are very well executed even in the close-ups of the monster; it is in their over use that is the problem. Although the model work does evidence a certain mechanical crudity (especially in the demon's leg movements in the long shots), the type of mobility utilized in these scenes evidences an eerie, otherworldly quality, thus achieving their goal, something which the far superior and smoother animation of a Harryhausen creation would have difficulty equaling under the same circumstances. Both authors are in agreement that the use of camera zooms into the monster's mouth (as well as having it race out of a close-up frame) are about as horrifyingly effective as the same sort of miserable technique used in Fred F. Sears' THE GIANT CLAW.

The present authors have reached a compromise over what they would like to have seen in regard to the demon's appearance. The demon should have been eliminated entirely from the first reel, with the audience's curiosity developed through a glimpse of the flicks of light (which gather to form the cloud from which the monster materializes), cross-cutting to Harrington, and then allowing the camera to remain on the victim, until we see the shot in which the creature's foot falls near Harrington's body, from which the film would quickly cut to Karswell's house. At the very end, perhaps the same use of the long shots of the demon (but for a briefer duration and optically treated so that it would appear semi-shrouded in its cloud) coming towards Karswell, the shot in which the creature's talons reach down to pick their victim up, and then about ten frames or so showing the demon (as Tourneur suggested) still shrouded so that they emerge as even more horrifying than they presently do. Undoubtedly, everyone who has seen the film and considered the various alternatives has their own view on the matter ranging from more extensive use of the model to its complete elimination.

Whatever the opinions may be, speculation as to what the film would be like in any sort of altered form is realistically useless. The harm done by placing the demon in the opening sequence by presenting the demon so obviously on the posters and in the majority of newspaper ad-mats by rearranging the hotel corridor sequence, and by the numerous deletions ... all of these things can never be subtracted. Perhaps somewhere in the vaults of Columbia Pictures, or even in some obscure foreign release print, the missing sequences of CURSE OF THE DEMON might still exist. But even if they have survived into the present time, the possibility of their ever being fully or even partially restored to existing prints is far more doubtful than the recent and extremely fortunate restoration of the missing scenes of KING KONG.

As it stands, CURSE OF THE DEMON must remain as a tragic, flawed masterpiece, masterful because of the collective intelligence which continued to make it a superlative gothic thriller in spite of everything which worked against its success ... but tragic in that it need never have been flawed at all.

CURSE OF THE DEMON

(Unrated) Selznick Films 1958
 83 minutes, 2,350 feet. Copyright 1957 by Selznick Productions Ltd. Approved Certificate MPAA No. 18489. Originally Released in Great Britain as NIGHT OF THE DEMON. Released in the U.S. by Columbia in February 1958. Executive Producer: Hal E. Chester. Produced by Frank Bens. Directed by Jacques Tourneur. Screen Play by Charles Bennett & Hal E. Chester. Based on the short story "Casting the Runes" by Montagu R. James. Director of Photography - Ted Saeed, B.S.C. Music Composed by Clifford Parker. Music Played by Symphonia of London Conducted by Maurice Maubourg. Production Designer: Ken Adam. Production Manager: R. L. Davidson. Film Editor - Michael Gordon. Assistant Director - Bud Kray. Sound Rehearsal: Arthur Sherborn. Dubbing Editor: Sound Effects (Hans) Charles Bradford. Special Effects: George Blackwell & Wally Verrera. Special Effects Photography - S.D. Denham, B.S.C. Commentary - Paula Gaynor, Ray Shylt. Betty Lee. Assistant Director: Peter G. Canning. Casting: Robert Layton, Florenz A. R.F.C. Studios, Elstree, England.

Cast: Dana Andrews (Dr. John Haddon), Peggy Cummin (Joanna Harrington), Moll MacDowell (Dr. Julian Karswell), Maurice Denham (Professor Henry Harrington), Arthur S. J. (Mrs. Karswell), John Robinson (Professor Mark O'Brien), Raymond Benham (Mr. Meek), Evan Ross (Lloyd Williams), Peter Elliott (Professor C.R. Kumar), Rosamund Greenwood (Mrs. Meek), Brian Wilde (Rand Halloway), Richard Leech (Inspector Montclair), Lloyd Lewis (Inspector Stronach), Peter Halls (Superintendent), Charles Lloyd Pack (Chancellor), John Sales (Librarian), Walter Mordaunt (Bishop), Kenneth Barrie, Leonard Sharp (Ticket Collector), Shay Gorman (Narrator), Ballard Berkeley (First Reporter), Michael Prue (Second Reporter), and in deleted sequences: Janet Burrow (Mrs. Horner), Peggy Herbert (Narrator), Lynn Tizay (Air Hostess)

FOOTNOTES

- Montagu R. James, "Casting the Runes," appearing in *Great Tales of Terror and the Supernatural*, ed. by Herbert A. Wise and Phyllis Frost (New York: The Modern Library, 1944), p. 237.
- Joel F. Siegel, *Walt Lewton: The Mystery of Horror* (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), p. 43.
- ibid., p. 35.
- Joel F. Siegel, "Tourneur Remembers: Recollections as Told to Joel F. Siegel," *Connoisseur*, Summer 1973, p. 25.
- Dana Andrews, private interview with Scott MacQueen, New Fairfield, Conn., August 28, 1973.
- James, "Casting the Runes," pp. 518-19.
- Siegel, *Walt Lewton*, p. 109.
- ibid., p. 32.
- Andrews, private interview.
- Tourneur, "Tourneur Remembers," p. 24.
- ibid.
- ibid.

MARIO BAVA

the illusion
of reality



by
adain J silver • James ursini

A carved sarcophagus reposes in a high-arched, sunbrowed crypt. After a montage in which the corpse/woman within it has undergone a metamorphosis from the bony remains of necrosis to newly-emerging flesh, the corpse has pulled back to medium long shot. From this vantage, the spectator who is familiar with the constructs of the genre may anticipate the sight of a hand suddenly stretching out perilously from the enclosure (as, for instance, in the vampire resurrection in *DRACULA—PRINCE OF DARKNESS*). Instead, the violent energy which has reanimated the ashes is suffused through the crenelary stone itself. There is a crack, an explosion. Granite fragments break away and crumble into heaps on the floor of the vault. The thin cloud of dust, disturbed after scores of years, settles and reveals the body still lying, unremoved, on the outslabe.

This sequence from *BLACK SUNDAY* (*LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO*, 1960) illustrates the expressive power of Mario Bava's mise-en-scene. It also suggests something of the scope and invention of his neo-Baroque imagery, which in turn, defines his directorial approach to the supernatural genre as a whole. That approach, to borrow Certeau's terms, "dissolves, diffuses, and disperses..." is essentially atavistic, seen as all objects (be subjects or otherwise) fixed and dead" (*Biography of Literature*, XIII). Here the "fixed and dead objects" are the conventions of the horror film—some overlaid to the point of overcrystallization and cliché—where, for many filmmakers, become suffocating restrictions. Bava's tactic is a heavy reliance on a visual expression which externalizes the metaphysical implications of the subject matter. To

accomplish this and to fashion something "essentially vital," Bava's only tools are the compositional and color sense acquired through many years of photographing the motion pictures of others and the limited compass of his own imagination. The cases of a preternatural revivification in films other than *BLACK SUNDAY* are too numerous to list, and the ways in which such occurrences have been staged are equally manifold. But few have ever captured the auras of demonic power underlying the event, and none have done it better than Bava. There is an intimation of unseen power in the intricate series of dissolves in *BLACK SUNDAY* as the skull begins to reacquire flesh in slow, barely perceptible stages and dramatized as each layer of skin reappears, as the putrefaction left by the devil's mask close into fine circles and vanish, as the black empty sockets gradually refill with the whites of eyes enraged by centuries of death, until finally the nostrils flare, the neck muscles contract, and the entire body arches up under the sting of new life. That energy, and the apprehension it engenders in the viewer, builds to a point at which it can no longer be contained, at which the stark tableau must rupture to release it.

The aura of such a sequence is characteristic of Bava, of the type of supernatural world which he creates on film. Unlike some, Bava does not focus on an extraordinary being or object in an otherwise natural environment. Instead, like Dante, he leads his central figures out of their normal lives, away from the straight path into an unexpectedly "dark forest." Most basically, the world in which Bava situates his characters is a mutable one, composed of opposing spheres of influence, of shifting contrasts and colors, of complements and antitheses. This world moves, like Spenser's "ever whirling wheel," from real to unreal and back again, from life to death and death to life through a landscape littered with phenomenological sights and sounds. On both symbolic and sensory levels, Bava's characters are thrust into the unstable middle ground between these two existential extremes, where figures glide through misty, opaquely decorated yet imsubstantial and illusory settings. This spectral passageway linking the natural and supernatural spheres is itself a universe of semi-darkness in which shadows and hallucinations are as actualized as "real" personages and, most importantly, in which the way forward or back is uncertain. The oracle Medea in *HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD* (*ERCOLE AL CENTRO DELLA TERRA*, 1961) typifies one stranded in this limbo. The masked form of the woman is merged with an eerie, luscious voice on the soundtrack, modulated as if she were calling up from a chamber deep below ground. She is separated from the camera's (real world's) plane of view by a curtain of shimmering beads, and a flood of green, blue, and gold lights succeed one another and spin through the frame, alternately striking her body and falling behind her to throw her into silhouette, while she sits swaying between two polarities.

Although much of this imagery is grounded in a photographic style which Bava may have developed in his earlier career, the mood and texture of these frames seem dictated by a conception of life as an uncomfortable union of illusion and reality. The consequent dramatic conflicts are primarily psychological, as characters confront the dilemma of distinguishing between the two perceptions. In *BLACK SUNDAY*, the protagonist is faced with a choice between a seductive vampire and a virginal young woman who happen to be identical in appearance. In the conclusion of *WHAT? (LA FRUSTA E IL CORPO*, 1963) the heroine dies without resolving the ambiguity of whether she has genuinely been haunted by the phantom of a murdered lover or simply conjured up his aspect out of her guilt-ridden subconscious. In *HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD*, the travellers to Hades are explicitly warned about the power of illusions by the Hesperides ("Do not believe in what you think you see"), counsel which is graphically confirmed when Hercules and Theseus dive into a sea of flames to discover it is only water.

The paradoxes of Bava's plots are not all as metaphysical as these. Some confusions of identity are deliberate deceptions and/or simple mystery-story conventions. Accordingly, some are exploited for suspense and some for

supernatural ambience. For example, the plot device of identical twins present in *BLACK SUNDAY* reappears in *ERIK THE CONQUEROR* (*GLI INVASORI*, 1961). In the latter film, the twin sisters are used straightforwardly: one portrays Rama, who rescues Erik after his shipwreck and with whom the Viking falls in love. The other, Daga, is the wife of Erik's lost brother. Iron. The occasional confusion which this ensemble causes is purely mechanical, but it does enhance the dramatic irony when the two rivals (Erik and Iron) learn that they are brothers. In *BLACK SUNDAY*, both the hero and the audience are unable to differentiate between the screeners, Asia, and her descendant, Katia (both played by Barbara Steele). In this instance, the introduction of physical doubles is central to the film's supernaturalism. The individual viewer, in order to suspect diabolical and to participate in the hero's point-of-view (i.e. in order to watch the film), is forced to accept the authenticity of *BLACK SUNDAY*'s unnatural twins.

KILL, BABY, KILL OR CURSE OF THE LIVING DEAD; OPERAZIONE PAURA, 1966) contains an even more disconcerting displacement. Bava isolates his hero in a minor house which is repeatedly haunted by the ghost of a young girl who strikingly resembles the child-demon created the following year by Fellini in *SPIRITS OF THE DEAD*. The initial confusion caused when he encounters the child's still-living mother surrounded by the decaying remnants of her daughter's existence, is compounded by the appearance of what may be the child herself, or her specter, or another child altogether. In a climactic scene, the protagonist pursues as assailant through a series of identical corridors and rooms; but as he catches the other, he finds that he has been chasing himself or, at least, an apparition that resembles him. After having played with the viewer's expectations throughout the course of the film—for instance, by having characters discuss whether they believe the haunting to be genuine or fake—Bava inserts this event without logical explanation. Similarly, in the fantasy sequence which immediately follows (a cut reveals a man entangled in a giant web in front of a painting of a cathedral, this then fades, and he awakens, now free of the web, before the actual building) may be a real occurrence or merely hallucination. Still another distortion and manipulation of the film's reality—and the audience's apprehension of what the limits of that reality are—are central to the narrative of *WHAT?* Not only does Neriuka, a young woman with sadomasochistic proclivities, claim that she is being tormented by her dead lover, but the viewer actually witnesses several visits to her bedroom where a dark figure chases and corners her. Of course, the audience is free to assume that the visions are only the projections of her disturbed mind; except for certain external, physical manifestations: his footprints in one scene, his laugh in another, the prints left by his boots in a third. As in *BLACK SUNDAY*, the potential reality of this apparition is reinforced by compelling the spectator to assume Neriuka's perspective at critical moments through the use of subjective camera. In the final scene, Neriuka is seen kissing her ghostly lover from one illogical-subjective angle, then a cut to another (subjective) one reveals her embracing the empty air.

As with the thematic conflicts of reality and illusion, the narrative ambiguities of Bava's films are heavily dependent on the visceral or emotional impact of his images. Even as he evokes the supernatural genre on a formal level, through stylistic resonances with other films of that type, he adds detail to his own motion pictures through unusual visual and figurative usages. In the first episode of *BLACK SABBATH* (*IL VOLTI DELLA PAURA*, 1963), after the nurse has stolen the ring of the woman over whom she kept a deathwatch, she is driven mad by the everyday objects in the house around her. First, she is assaulted by the amplified sound of a drop of water, then the fear which flashes through her like a chill is made physically real by the intermittent glare of a blue spotlight, blinking on and off outside her window and constantly altering the color temperature of the room. A similar blue light envelops the father who returns from killing a vampire in the final episode of the same film and makes it instantaneously clear that his family's concern that

Two views of director Mario Bava. LEFT: Bava in 1960 on the set of his first and, perhaps, most successful directorial assignment, *BLACK SUNDAY*. RIGHT: Bava today.





The content of Bava's films are heavily dependent upon the visceral and emotional impact of his images. LEFT: John Richardson and Andrea Cechoni approach the sleeping form of Barbara Steele in the high-arched crypt where she has undergone a frightening metamorphosis in *BLACK SUNDAY*. RIGHT: The corpse of a woman appears to return to life in the first episode of *BLACK SABBATH*.

he might become undead himself has not been groundless, for that pall of light which grips him is the equivalent of an aura of death. In *BLACK SUNDAY*, the simple fear of a character who moves down a corridor is wordlessly communicated to the viewer by a shifting side-light, striking first one half of the face and then the other in an equation of the combined apprehension and curiosity which drives the figure hesitatingly forward. Such an equation is only partially realized in the black-and-white context of *BLACK SUNDAY*, but Bava completes it in *WHAT!* As Newsky walks towards a room in which she believes her dead loved awaits her, the sound of a whip and her expectant, sensual gasps are overlaid on the soundtrack. As she continues, vacillating momentarily between what she knows and what she imagines, between dread and the anticipation of pleasure, Bava alternately sidlights her on left and right with cold blue and burning red. Like the red mist through which Hercules and his companions drifted unconsciously into the nether world of rust-colored trees and crimson lakes, such light and color play can act as simple premonitions or as externalizations of a character's thoughts and sensations.

Even as he gives the audience detailed information about his personages through light and color, Bava may manipulate mythic and social codes to prevent his plots from being too predictable and to instill a sense of anxiety in the viewer based on manning. For instance, the two Oalmans which accompany the entry of Katie in *BLACK SUNDAY* suggest incorrectly that she might be the sorceress resurrected with two bestial features. Inevitably, the plot twist at the conclusion of *PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES* (TERRORE NELLO SPAZIO, 1965), in which the extraterrests seen throughout the film are revealed to be aliens, is surprising only because the audience had assumed from their speech and features that they were human. A more complex use of manning, in a film like *HATCHET FOR A HONEYMOON* (IL ROSSO SEGNO DELLA FOLLIA, 1969), involves a partial deconstruction of "traditional" symbols to penetrate to the false, social assumptions underlying them. The character psychology in this film may seem obvious from the first view of the protagonist's secret room, full of mannequins in bridal gowns, toys, and other artifacts through which he attempts to recapture the innocence of his childhood. The overt "key" to his psychopathology is an elaborate ritual in which he lures models to their death. The childish rustic-box tune which he plays while seducing his victims and his Oedipal dreams recalling his own mother's murder on her wedding night further suggest, at first, a "classic" pattern of trauma and repressed sexuality redirected into outbursts of violence. Bava alters the expressive quality of these somewhat clichéd sequences by dislocating at an early stage the extent to which the central character is aware of the symbolic value of his own actions. As he remarks in voiceover in the scene after the trial, while he examines his face in a mirror, "No one would think to look at me that I am completely insane." Such perversely Freudian touches as the burnt bread popping out of the toaster while the protagonist argues with his wife over his sexual dimorphism or the waiting to the tune of the rustic-box with one of his victims dressed in a gown of his design, first become semi-artificial in context, then artificial entirely as the killer loses control of his own aberrations. He violates the criminal pattern he has set for himself (the pattern in which he feels insecurely secure) by attacking his wife. The immediate result is that he is almost caught. The long-term effect is that he finds himself plagued by his wife's vengeful ghost. As in earlier films, Bava fails to clarify whether this haunting is genuine or imaginary, so that the schizophrenic impact in the opening scene—in which the character, as a young boy, lurks outside a train compartment while his adult self murders a honeymooning couple—takes hold of the central figure and the film assumes a new significance: the same enigmatic perspective shift as in the final shots of *WHAT!*

The visual expression of the dichotomy between reality and illusion in Bava's films may be as elaborate as the visit to the oracle in *HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD* or as simple as a cut from the murderer's subjective viewpoint to an opposing, objective, one in *HATCHET FOR A HONEYMOON*. Occasionally, Bava may include a ritualistic archetype in a suspenseful picture. It is necessary to the film's atmosphere of the plot—for example, the black helmet worn by Runk in *KNIVES OF THE AVENGER* (RAFFICA DI COLTELLI, 1967), which conceals his face when he rapes an enemy's bride, or the summoning of the spirits in *BARON BLOOD*. Bava is,

however, more concerned with the expressive than with the narrative value of such devices. The masks of the oracle Media or the sorceress Asa may, like that of Runk, conceal or obliterate their identities. More significantly, masks have a connotation of being larger-than-life which can be melodramatic and unsettling independent of any specific story-line.

The extent to which the elements of Bava's mise-en-scène are calculated to cause particular viewer responses is perhaps most easily analyzed in his murder mysteries and costume films. In the former, there are no detective heroes methodically stripping away the layers of deception created by the criminal figures, either the criminals themselves or the potential victims are the central characters. Neither the methods of the police nor the intricacies of the plot warrant as much attention as the limbo of uncertainty which these criminals and victims inhabit and to which the images are keyed. The long pursuit through the fog-shrouded streets and alleyways of a small town in *BARON BLOOD* and the opening murder in night mists of a city park in *BLOOD AND BLACK LACE* (ISEI CONNE PER L'ASSASSINO, 1964) are typical Bava sequences. Figures are forced to flee from obscure assailants, past isolated street lamps or lighted windows offering no safety, across dim nightmarish landscapes, which would, in daylight, seem perfectly ordinary and unthreatening. Even inside a locked apartment, as in the second episode of *BLACK SABBATH* ("The Telephone"), a woman may be so unnerved by a voice coming through a receiver that the sound of phone ringing is suddenly louder and more menacing than a gunshot.

Such visual and aural statements are more than metaphors for the inner states of the characters. They reassert the existence of a chaotic, almost formless universe somewhere beyond the ordered boundaries of normal, material reality into which ordinary persons may inadvertently stumble. This holds true even for the costume films or, more specifically, for Bava's efforts in the peculiarly Italian type of action melodrama which features a hero of unusually great strength or martial ability. But Bava's films in this broad genre category contain no superheroes. The title figure of *HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD* is strong but far from indomitable and requires the assistance of legendary companions to complete his mission in the underworld. The Viking films, *ERIK THE CONQUEROR* and *KNIVES OF THE AVENGER*, have a similarly understated and mythic quality; and just as the non-criminal figures in the modern films seem prey to random violence, their heroes are placed in tragic situations by some exterior force (as Runk sorrowfully observes in *KNIVES OF THE AVENGER*, "Odin decides what our destinies are").

In a sense, Bava's modern pictures conform to a mythology of their own, which is in some ways more rigid than the preestablished context of the costume films. The beautiful young models, for instance, particularly in *BLOOD AND BLACK LACE*, but also in the second episode of *BLACK SABBATH*, *HATCHET FOR A HONEYMOON*, and *FIVE GILLS FOR THE AUGUST MOON* (CINQUE SAMPOLLE PER LA LUNA, 1968) are all ostensibly normal people. Yet their very occupation poses a commitment to the validity of surface appearances. Bava frequently makes them victims because they epitomize the complacency of the everyday world. Confronted with a para-normal threat, whether in the form of a ghost or a psychopath, these human mannequins are helplessly ill-equipped to react and save themselves.

Ironicly, Bava treats those characters whose nervousness, whose distrust of every shadow and stray sound does equip them to survive, as semi-comic and arbitrary outsiders. The heroine of *THE EVIL EYE* (LA RAGAZZA CHE SAPEVA TROPPO, 1962—an original title which confirms Bava's shrewd disguised parody of thrillers like Hitchcock's *THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH*) becomes such a figure in self-defense. After witnessing the death of a stabbing victim, she faints and comes to in a hospital where she has been admitted for chronic alcoholism. Her story is dismissed as a case of the O.T.'s, and this sets in motion a central series of scenes in which significant details are designed to be missed. In a visit to an isolated rural locale, ominous low angles and traveling shots follow her as she tries to make a surreptitious long run, but he catches up and propositions her. In another episode, the mare of thorns and talcum powder, which she sets up in her living room to trip up the

knife-wielding killer whom she believes is out to eliminate her, only succeeds in almost breaking the neck of a frustrated young doctor trying to cure her of her delusions (or, at least, what he thinks are delusions). In the final scene, after the killer has been caught, she and the doctor both witness a jealous husband shoot his wife and her lover while riding on a mountain-side cable-car, but because of his insistence that she forget all about murders, she refuses to acknowledge seeing anything. It is simultaneously one of the blackest and most humorous conclusions in Bava's work.

Because, either seriously or satirically, all of Bava's films resolve thematically around a denial of the permanence of commonplace reality, his visual usage is beyond what has already been mentioned—as eclectic as the various genres in which he works. Where appropriate, Bava uses standard effects such as long takes to build dramatic tension (the fashion show which is a prelude to the first murder in **BLOOD AND BLACK LACE**), low angles for dominance (the initial encounter between Runk and the villainous Augus in **KNIVES OF THE AVENGER**), or even non-linear montage for an abstract or symbolic statement (the cuts from a vampire embracing her lover in the third episode of **BLACK SABBATH**, to her undead family watching through a window and then outside to the victim's horse, whinnying, rearing up, and breaking his tether to flee). An isolated detail which is used for suspense in one film (the killer peering through a curtain in **BARON BLOOD**) may be transmutated for comic purposes in another (the eye in her dead uncle's portrait which seem to follow the heroine of **THE EVIL EYE** as she undresses). The principles of make-up and special effects which make possible the reification of the vampire in **BLACK SUNDAY** are reapplied satirically in **DANGER DIABOLIK** (DIABOLIK, 1968), where exaggerated costuming and elaborate matte shots make the characters stand out in relief like comic-book figures. Even the most bizarre images may be used to elicit shock (as when the dead astronauts stand up in their shallow graves in **PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES** and tear out of their arses, plastic shrouds or laughter (the close-shot of the supposedly dead Diabolik encased in translucent gold wrinks at his female accomplice)).

In some instances, Bava appears to rely on visual inventiveness to conceal his budgetary limitations. To create a raid on a Viking village in **ERIK THE CONQUEROR**, he assembles a montage of individual spear thrusts, death blows, figures falling back towards the camera, and hurled firebrands, all moving in the same direction and ending with a panning long shot as the last of the raiders ride out of the smoldering remains of the village. In other instances, he expends a considerable amount of production value merely to add a novel touch to a mythic form. For the duel in a huge, torch-lit cave in **ERIK THE CONQUEROR**, Bava uses an establishing long-shot and a prologue in which the participants must first forge their own weapons, delaying and enhancing the action of the combat itself. In moments of narrative horror, Bava relies on close-traveling, hard side-light, or rapid zooms, supported by a frenzy of discordant sounds, to subvert the ordinary stability of the frame; and such imagery underscores the mutable nature of filmic reality as Bava sees it. Even Bava's prop—a claw-like knife formed like the fingers of a skeletal hand in **HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD** or the whip in **WHAT** which writhes in the air when Nevera is raped by her former lover and labor curls and chars like a living thing when his corpse is consumed by flames—possess an unnatural animation of their own.

Even though the visual style of his motion pictures may be unique and unmistakable—and, in effect, on those several pictures where he receives credit under a pseudonym that style is Bava's real and only signature—no director can completely transcend his material. For Mario Bava, who has labored exclusively in a production system where even A-budgets are small by international standards, where multiple camera and post-synchronization are not options but standard procedure, the odds against any such transcendence have always been higher. That the sea-battle in **ERIK THE CONQUEROR**, staged in a studio tank with two props, a fog-machine, and a moving camera should turn out to be infinitely more convincing than the clash of expensive miniatures in **BEN-HUR** is merely a tribute to Bava the technician. It would still be extravagant to claim that a man working against such limitations has become one of the most striking of film's diminishing number of stylists, but,

no matter how feeble the character development or how far-fetched the plot, the extraordinary quality of Bava's images assert that such is the case and do so more directly and eloquently than any amount of critical praise.

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Films Directed by Mario Bava

- KEY**
 Prod. Co. = Production Company
 Distr. = Distributor
 Cast = Cast
 Dir. = Director
 Sc. = Screenplay
 Ph. = Photography
 Art Dir. = Art Direction
 Ed. = Editor
- LA MASCHERA DEL DEMONIO (BLACK SUNDAY)** (1960) Italy Prod. Co. Gelma-Jolly, Distr. American International, Dir. Mario Bava, Sc. Mario Bava, Ennio de Concio, Mario Biondini based on the story "The Vind" by Nikolai Gogol; Ph. Mario Bava, Music: Roberto Nicolosi (in Italy), Les Baxter (in English version); Ed. Mario Serandrei.
 Cast: Barbara Steele (The Witch Princess and Kate), John Richardson (Dr. Gorbach), Leo Gennaro (Karl's Father), Andrea Checchi (Dr. Chomel), Antonio Donnino (Savastaro), Ernesto D'Amico (Karl's Brother), Carlo Simi (Inspector), Gennaro Donnino (Inspector's Daughter), Mario Pisuano (Nikolai), Tina Bianchi (Witch) 84 mins.
- ERICO AL CENTRO DELLA TERRA (HERCULES IN THE HAUNTED WORLD, HERCULES IN THE CENTER OF THE EARTH)** (1961) Italy Prod. Co. SPA Cinematografica, Prod. Achille Paoli, Dir. Mario Bava, Sc. Mario Bava, Alessandro D'Amico, Giorgio Prosperi, Duilio Tassin, Ph. Mario Bava, Ubaldo Terzani, Tascapicci; Art. Dir. Franco Lalli, Music: Armando Trovajoli, Ed. Mario Serandrei, Costumes: Mario Giusi.
 Cast: Ray Regis (Hercules), Leonora Ruffo (Desmina), Christopher Lee (Lucius), Giorgio Arlano (Themis), Iida Gail, Ely Dasso, Maria Belli 77 mins.
- GLI INVASORI (ERIK THE CONQUEROR, THE INVADERS, FURY OF THE VIKINGS)** (1961) Italy/France Prod. Co. Galerna/Cinemas/Scena Cinematografica, Lira, Dir. Mario Bava; Sc. Mario Bava, Oreste Bianchi, Piero Ferrini, Ph. Mario Bava, Ubaldo Terzani (Dressmaker), Colori, Art. Dir. Giorgio Gessner, Costumes: Tina Giani, Ed. Mario Serandrei, Music: Roberto Nicolosi.
 Cast: Cameron Mitchell (Eric), Giorgio Arlano (Eric), Andrea Checchi (Gunnar), Francesco Chiappini (Queen Alia), Helen Kessler (Dora), Alice Knödel (Rene), Felix Lall (Aelia), Franco Giacobini (Rashid), Joe Robinson (Eric's Host), Raffaele Baldassarri (Bibi), Ennio Deira (Brenet), Franco Rinaldi (King Lotar), Luca Cortusa (Raffaele) 98 mins.
- LA RAGAZZA CHE SAPEVA TROPPO (THE GIRL WHO KNEW TOO MUCH, THE EVIL EYE)** (1960) Prod. Co. Galerna/Coronet, Distr. Warner, Italy, Dir. Mario Bava, Prod. Fulvio De Martini, Exec. Prod. Luciano Banti, Sc. Ennio De Concio, Ennio De Seta, Franco Prosperi, Giorgio Corbelli, Mino Guarnini, Mario Bava, Ph. Mario Bava, Ubaldo Terzani, Art. Dir. Giorgio Gessner, Music: Roberto Nicolosi (Italian version), Les Baxter (English version), Ed. Mario Serandrei.
 Cast: Leticia Roman (Nora Drowsen), John Saxon (Dr. Marcello Bani), Valentina Cortese (Laura Craen Tournay), Daria Di Paolo (Lunella), Roberto Badier (Dr. Alessi), Gennaro Di Bernadette (Prof. Tassin), Jim Dabry, Virginia Dora, Chava Casarini, Peggy Neilson, Maria Meloni, Lucia Modugno 92 mins.
- LA FRUSTA E IL CORPO (WHAT, THE FLESH AND THE WHIP, NIGHT IN THE PHANTOMS)** (1963) Italy/France Prod. Co. Vox/Luce-Francia/IFF, Exec. Prod. John Daei (Elio Sordani), Dir. John M. Didi (Mario Bava), Sc. Julian Barry (Emilio Gersaldi), Robert Hugo (Gogo Guarni), Marcel Hardy (Luciano Martini), Ph. David Hamilton (Ubaldo Terzani) (Colori), Art. Dir. Dick Gray (Gennaro Serri); Ed. Bob King (Roberto Gennari); Music: John Murphy (Carlo Rinaldi)

LEFT: Astronauts on the planet Aura bury their dead in **PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES**. Bava made use of a fog machine so as not to have to construct an expensive alien landscape. RIGHT: Costuming and photography make John Phillip Law and Maria Mell stand out like comic-book figures in **DANGER DIABOLIK**.





LEFT: The versatile *Coke Hooper* (with beard) directs a scene from *THE TENS* "RAIN SAW MASSACRE," RIGHT: Ter-Minim finds herself in a room filled with human and animal bones.

advertisements music while the ship is pursuing the shark. When this occurs, the music works against the film's tension, but generally his score reinforces the proper mood of suspense and extreme peril.

Bill Butler's photography is always excellent, sometimes even brilliant (i.e. the eerie lighting of the overhead night shot enveloping the two vessels alongside one another), capturing the utter helplessness of the massed or solitary swimmers by effective use of water level closeups. Also notable is the excellent blending of mechanical shark footage with sequences utilizing a real shark. Joseph Allen's art direction, combined with the carefully selected locations, captures the beautiful Amery Island landscape (see *Movie*) perfectly visualizing Benda's setting. Verne Field's masterful editing, with its building and maintaining of suspense by the use of quick cutting in the shark attacks, thus adding greatly to the film's suspense.

There's a scene in *MOBY DICK* where Richard Barthelme plays out at a porting of a huge whale breaching out of the water onto a whaling vessel. The movie young men turn to witness ancient Harry Andrews and queries, "Can whales do that?" Upon which Andrews launches into a tirade about the nearly supernatural powers possessed by whales. But *Moby Dick* never lives up to these tall tales in the film, in spite of the fact that he is supposedly the greatest of whales.

The shark in *JAWS* does live up to these boasts about whales' and most! Each appearance of the fish is carefully calculated to reveal a little more of its features, each new sequence designed to surprise the jolt handed in by the previous shark encounter. We have the huge shark attacking strolling swimmers, pulling down a small dock, knocking over a small boat before the audience has already witnessed evidence of its having partially sunk another larger boat by ramming and chewing its way through the hull, and meeting all efforts to kill it, including dozens of bullets and rifle-fired harpoons. Eventually, after some very menacing to head into the hell of *Jaws*'s boat, the shark leaps right out of the water onto the stern of the sinking ship (and into our laps in the best *Quo* tradition), gobbling up the captain before our horrified eyes. It is quite probably the most frightening real life monster ever seen on film—certainly more frightening than any Harryhausen creation to date, not because of any superior model making ability involved, but in its superb and careful presentation against a realistic backdrop. Much of the film's suspense is related to the almost supernatural ability of the shark knowing when and where to strike. Along with its hugeness, it often creates an impression that it is something far more menacing and intelligent than the average shark. This is especially disconcerting when the shark moves into the unwatched gold area of the screen when the men swimming are being carefully watched; the feeling is conveyed that the shark realizes the danger there and the safety of feeding in the other area.

Outwardly, *JAWS* has a tendency to remind one of *THE EXORCIST* and perhaps even *William Friedkin*'s direction of the film. Both films among both highly successful novels, received heavy publicity before and after their release, were controversial hits, and featured sequences which made audiences' hair literally stand on end. One of the chief differences between the two would appear to be that Spielberg's reliance on the experience of seeing to a far greater extent than Friedkin. In retrospect,

THE EXORCIST—an excellent horror film nonetheless—seems overlong and weighed down not only with religious pretensions and any dream sequences, but with a determination to film essentially everything that has been written with relatively few exceptions. In seeking as a faithfully translated adaptation, the film sacrifices the pace which it might have had had much of the novel been carefully excised or improved upon. While it's true that the last half of *THE EXORCIST* moves at a rather slower pace, the first half is quite tedious, especially after repeated viewings.

JAWS, like Spielberg's *DUEL*, is in direct contrast to *THE EXORCIST*, is a study in pacing from its opening reel. Hardly conformed to appeal solely to horror film aficionados, *JAWS* runs a wide reader screen, varied genres, embracing the best of the adventure film, thriller, as well as the horror film. It is a well written, beautifully directed, superbly played, and horrendously frightening, in short, everything one could possibly have wished the production to be. One may rest assured that with its huge commercial success other producers will follow with bigger and (hopefully) greater thrillers, some no doubt under the inspired guidance of Steven Spielberg. Both are reasons for jubilation celebration.

—Ronald V. Borst

THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE Released by Brynston Pictures, 1974. 87 minutes. Copyright by Vortex, Inc. A Vortex/Marble-Hooper Production in CFI Color. Executive Producer Jay Parsley. Produced, Screened and Additional Photography by Tobe Hooper. Associate Producers Kim Henkel & Richard Senneker. Screenplay & Story by Kim Henkel & Tobe Hooper. Cinematographer: Daniel Pearl, Art Director: Robert A. Burns. Production Manager: Ronald Brown. Edited by Sally Richardson & Larry Carroll. Assistant Director: Sally Richardson. Music Score by Tobe Hooper & Wayne Bell. Songs "Tool for a Billion" by Roger Burton & Francis, "Blas" & "Gland Hand" by Tenkette Rose, "Gland's Sick Again" & "Wish Room of Daylight" by Arky bay, "Frens Or Las Flores" & "Poco A Poco Ray" by Los Cyclopes. Makeup by Dorothy Pearl. Makeup Assistant: Lynn Lockwood. Greeting/Makeup by W. E. Sims. Sound Mix: Todd A.O., Marilyn Burns. Stunt Girl: Mary Church.

Cast: Marilyn Burns (Sally Hardesty), Bud Paxton (Franklin Hardesty), Edwin Neal (Hechbach), Jim Siedow (Old Man), Gunnar Hansen (Leatherface), William Vail (Kirk), Tim McInnes (Pearl), Allen Dangler (Garny), John Dagen (Grandfather), Joe Ball (Megan Grunk), Robert Courton (Mildred Wheeler), Jerry Lorenz (Pickup Driver).

"Who will survive and what will be left of them?" *America's most intense and brutal cinema?* "What happened is true. Now the motion picture that's not as real." These publicity blurbs, accompanying an ad campaign showing a horribly mutilated fat man leaping a chain saw in front of a swimming, leftless girl impaled on a meat hook, heralded the arrival of *Evolutionary Pictures* 1974 release *THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE*.

Great? Unquestionably. But whatever one's opinion of the film may be, *CHAIN SAW* is quite possibly the most terrifyingly brutal example of a horror film yet produced. Labeling the film as the work of a publicity campaign, the film would seem to be the perfect example



of the kind of "horror" the late Boris Karloff aptly lauded and frequently associated with the term monster. After my own initial exposure to *CHAIN SAW*, I left the theater somewhat stunned and amazed, primarily because I found myself liking the film immensely, yet wondering why I shouldn't be deploping the making of a picture which is in many ways the very antithesis of both the old and newer horror films which I consider to be my personal favorites. I couldn't help agreeing with one friend who considered it the best horror film of his year, but conversely found myself in partial if not complete agreement with my date that it was essentially a sick and disgusting film. I attempted to mentally equate the film as a form of cinematic entertainment on a level with the standard shocker, thrill, and horror of the current types of genre films being churned out by Hammer, Amicus, et al but it seemed exceptionally difficult to defend, let alone praise, a film which deals so blatantly with the wholesale slaughter of innocent people by a family of deranged murderers. There's appeared to be no elements of fantasy to be considered — only cold, cruel, calculated sadism in the extreme. The last film I had seen which in any way conveyed so disturbing feelings when we saw *THE EXORCIST*, but that film, as violent as it was, was entertaining. — a straight forward horror thriller of over three was one in some of its use of

real language and any pseudo-noirish claptrap accompanying it. But *CHAIN SAW* does not deal with the supernatural, indeed, if the film's initial impact upon me could be compared to any prior film I had seen, it would have had to be the decidedly wrapped *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT*, a picture whose sequences involving the kidnapping, torture, rape and eventual killing of two helpless girls by a trio of "lucky" left me with such a bad impression that I was ashamed to bring up in a theater watching it under the guise of amusement.

But there was definitely something more to *CHAIN SAW* than that as it apart and above *LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT* in every respect: qualities which had imprinted me in the sense of the stomach-churning sequences and which made it essential that I see the film again. Somewhat happily, I came away from the second viewing convinced that the film was an above average thriller — a film which, in spite of its guttural, does place constraints upon space and which borrows liberally from cliché old and dozens of previous horror films.

CHAIN SAW's opening reel is splendidly conceived. After the prologue (and only reel) showing warning the audience that the events which are about to be enacted are based on fact, the screen goes completely black. This blackout — a direct victory related by a series of flutists — briefly illuminating something which is not immediately recognizable. Slowly, it becomes apparent that the subject being photographed is derelict in a ghastly human corpse. Cut! To a brilliantly snarled dog and a closeup of the same corpse which has, along with portions of another rotting body, been viewed to a monument in a rural Texas cemetery. The camera slowly tracks back revealing the grotesque tableau as totto, while an off-screen newscaster reports the local gang robbery reprisal.

There is another cut to a dead animal lying by the side of a road as a man speeds by in the distance. The whole's concept: Sally Hardesty, her wretchedly injured brother, Franklin, and three of their friends, Jerry, Penn and Kirk have heard the broadcast and have come to see if

the Hardesty's grandfather's grave has been disturbed.

Introguing events follow in rapid succession: a nearby drunk lies rolling in the grass maddening to himself, "Three Hoppers Hopped" (the Hardesty's best friend, "I see things," Her grandfather's grave undisturbed, Sally and her friends continue on their way, almost antipathetically pining for a slaughterhouse. Franklin delights in meeting his groom as another slaughterhouse from Ann Remm from an anatomical book. Horrifying death happens in the next particular day. A Hitchhiker looks up before them and the group decides to give him a ride due to the intense heat. "I think we just picked up Dracula!" Franklin excitedly mutters and it isn't long before the rest realize that they're dead a number of times. It's just helping out the fatally scared and fifty young men gaining insanity before them. For no explicable reason, the strange grins. Franklin's pocket knife and machete violently slashes his own veins, giving himself blood to see to as he in the blood splatters down his forehead. After Franklin subsequently returns to buy a blurred snapshot of himself taken with the stranger with his camera giving rise to the speculation that he was the unseen photographer. Then the film's opening scene, the hitchhiker starts the youths by placing a small amount of gunpowder on the photo and then igniting it in the middle of a small road of tin foil. Before the others barely have a chance to stop screaming at his insanity, the man puts out the small flames, pulls out a razor and proceeds to shave his head. When done, the group manages to stop the vet and force the psychopath off, but even as they continue on their way, he follows them, looking at them, screaming blood on the side of the vehicle, sticking out his tongue and, most disturbing of all, giving them a look that says "I am an anatomical wronger calling it in." "Understanding and understandable."

Stopping at a gas station where they are greeted by an antibiotic window washer and an old attendant, they are told by the latter that there is no gas. The hitchhiker starts to go on and explore the long-distance Franklin house around the old man's advice that they should "not mess around with these old houses." The audience instantly knows he is right, considering visions of Psycho-like houses, but the hitchhiker continues to lead them into the Hitchhiker film and decide to go ahead with their plans to explore the place. Arriving at the house—the extremely typical old dark house set among dozens of trees—we expect the movie, but except for its mere appearance, a mass of things happen, nothing happens. "I'm damn hungry from a doorway, nothing happens."

And then Kirk decide to go for a dip in an old swimming hole. Sally has recalled from her childhood. But the hole has gone dry and out of curiosity the pair are forced to go home. The hitchhiker then returns, looking upon several convulsed cars and trucks, they fail to grasp the horrifying possibilities—that there are cars of victims of whatever lives in the nearby painted white house nearby. No one answers when Kirk knocks on the door, so he eventually goes back. The hitchhiker then returns a human tooth found on the porch. Proceeding through the screen door into the house, Kirk spots a room in the rear with dozens of mounted animal heads and decides to venture in for a closer inspection. He is almost into the room when he trips and falls on a lamp leading into the room. Suddenly, a huge figure with a bloodied apron and horrible mask apparently hopped from human skin appears and brings a huge hammer down on the fallen young. His body uncontrollably recoiled with muscle spasms. Kirk is killed with another blow to the head, then hurled aside into the room like a mouse pounds of beef. The huge man then dams a steel door shut upon the boy.

Then, wondering about Kirk's disappearance, follows after her boy friend, but is drawn to a room off to one side of the hallway by a clicking sound. The door behind is attracted like a vacuum, suspended in a mere pit barely large enough to hold it in a room literally saturated in human and animal bones, feathers and remnants of all sizes and descriptions, many of them forming a macabre altar to some Dracula-like deity. The door behind him for the front door, only to be interrupted by "Leatherface" who arrives her back into the built-in slaughterhouse room where he proceeds to hang his hair on one of the animal mask hooks on one of the walls. Turning in anger, Ray dies as Leatherface parks up a chain saw and begins to saw away at Kirk's bedridden form.

Sumner, Jerry leaves Sally and Franklin only to be similarly slaughtered to death by Psycho. Sally and Franklin, flashlight in hand, set off in an hour or so later and come face to face with the chain saw. The Hitchhiker in the middle of the underground. Disemboweling the helpless Franklin on the spot, Leatherface then sets off in pursuit of the screaming Sally. "Seeing some house lights in the distance, the girl races up to the door, unaware it is a slaughterhouse's own door. Looking at the door behind her, she discovers up the screen in search of help only to find the nothing remains of a man and woman. Leatherface cuts through the door with his saw and the girl just barely manages to escape by hurling herself through an upstairs window. Horrifying pictures for the Hitchhiker film, the way for the way to the gas station, the group had stopped at the afternoon, finding temporary safety in the arms of the old

attendant. But the old man turns out to be Leatherface's brother, and trying the girl up, he brings her back to the house from which he is joined by his sister, the psychopathic Hitchhiker. Ranting and ranting among themselves, the thrashed prepare for a late night supper beneath a lampshade (fashioned of human skull), eventually carrying down the grandfather's seemingly dead form from upstairs. Getting Sally's flashlight, the Hitchhiker smelt it into the old man's mouth when suddenly, the old man becomes animal, swelling contentedly on the finger like some centuried old vampire, his face looking away from their decay. Leatherface decides that it should be possible to get the best deal on the new skin, which should have the honor of killing the girl, but the old codger can barely master the technique to hold the small hammer placed in his hand, let alone use it to smash in Sally's skull, and the girl is able to free herself from their clutches and make good her escape by once again crawling through a window. Half running, half hobbling from her ordeal, she makes her way to the main highway, leant all of the way by Hitchhiker who is about to finish her off as he is madly crushed beneath the wheels of a passing pickup truck. Pauline climbing into the rear of a passing pickup truck (whose driver wastes little time in moving on after spying the oncoming Leatherface), Sally lapses into hysterical laughter as the truck pulls away from her former who madly whips out in a bizarre "death" message" as the film abruptly cuts to the end and title.

THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE owes much of its origins and whatever financial or critical success it may achieve to memorable film which produced it, but there are other factors which make it a movie of the greatest influence upon its style and structure in the way of or another are PSYCHO, NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and THE EXORCIST, all of them also controversial films at the time of their original release. But along with the horror and the horror, the film's success in CHAIN SAW seems more than a striking resemblance to a seldom seen, and seemingly forgotten film of 1962 entitled THE SAGIST (literally known as television as THE FACE OF TERROR or PROFILE OF TERROR). Released by Hammer Film Productions by James Landis and featuring Arch Hall Jr. in the title role, THE SAGIST is one of the most overlooked and underrated genre films of its decade. Its plot is simplistic: three school teachers set out to see a baseball game on a beautiful summer day. Michael, the youngest of the three, they stop at a convenience gas station/liquor which is seemingly deserted. They soon discover that the owners have been slain by an insane young psychopath and are brutally sick girl friend. The remainder of the film deals with the efforts of the teachers to escape, realizing he will eventually kill them all. Both male teachers are killed, the older one seductively shot in the head while begging on his knees for his life and the other, supposedly the film's "hero," shot a split second before he can even warn his life. The film ends with the girl having the home phone upon the door with him in panic, just as he is about to catch up to her, he accidentally plunges his death in a pit filled with rottenness.

THE SAGIST is essentially a variation on and elaboration of THE EXORCIST, despite the fact that the former film claims to be based upon a true occurrence; the same incident, in fact, which inspired Robert Bloch to write his novel, Psycho. In 1963, a handyman named Ed Gein was arrested after police discovered scores of disemboweled bodies. He claimed to be a religious fanatic, a loner, a pacifist, a misanthrope. The account of this mass murderer and grave robber has recently received a more faithful (if far more crude and misleading) screen treatment in American International's DERANGED.

CHAIN SAW was also influenced by NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD (indeed, it was the critical and financial success of that film and its ultimate emergence as something of a cult classic which seems to have prompted the Texas film, which grossed millions and stands firmly by 30 year old Torso House). The Texas film features had been the limited release, EGGHUSSELL to try their hand at making their own independently financed film. There are strong similarities between the two pictures, but Psycho's film is superior in terms of script, acting and direction. In addition, it does not require the audience to suspend logic and accept a ridiculous premise concerning revenge. Rather, it informs us that the events about to be depicted are true. However distorted they may be, the incidents portrayed in CHAIN SAW are frighteningly realistic and reflect the recent gruesome murders uncovered in Texas.

The major target for outcows of CHAIN SAW unquestionably stems from its violence. Hooper, himself, is unrepentant in his evaluation of the movie, referring to it as a film "... about mass murder people who have a violent desire to kill people, and the rate and the rate and rate... crazy twisted people going beyond the line between animal and human." Actually, to audiences accustomed to watching horror like James Bond killings and adventures in a single sequence, the five killings in CHAIN SAW should seem comparatively moderate. Nor are the murders overwhelmingly gory. The film is BLOOD FEAST/THOUSAND NANNAS style. Hooper is

obviously as much concerned with developing atmosphere and sustaining suspense as he is in shocking his audiences. The violence in CHAIN SAW is not gratuitous, it is how they are photographed but, rather, with who is killed and how they die. Commercial objects like sledge hammers and chain saws make for more horrifying weapons than guns, knives and other such typical instruments of death. Hooper does not dwell on graphic, bloody tableaux, it is the build-up, the suspense, and the sheer useless display of people we have been waiting for that makes us cry out.

In spite of his overall success in the areas of producing, directing and so on, the worst (except for Hooper's inexperience often causes him to become carried away in both individual sequences and in certain plot contrivances. When Jerry follows after his companion into the slaughterhouse room, he opens a flower in the corner. Part of his body which suddenly shatters and uncontrollably lurches up into his face due to muscle reaction. The actor is designed solely to scare, appears unrealistic (due to Tom Hopper's acting) and is unneeded. Also, going far from the movie then the terrifying of the long sequence with the use of madmen laughing and screaming at the climax. Up to this point, all three actors have convincingly developed their own unique streaks of insanity only to divert in a scene which should have been major or potentially better. Another error is the grandfather character, who is only because he is seen in it so many times before, but because the greater the audience is, the more the audience is, the more the audience is. (Including Duane Hoffman's old film known as LITTLE BIG MAN on the youth playing the character is so absurdly late. In spite of these shortcomings, all of the movie's directorial efforts, particularly with Marilyn Hertz' horror early on, and the director's use of the film in NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, Gunner Hooper makes for a generally unimpressive Leatherface (the superb director, never from looking his malformed teeth as he has in his experience, but the director to arrive on and seeing Jim Seaweed, the director brother—was off by Hitchhiker as "just a cook"—seems to be the one cooking up the butchered victims and passing them off as barbecue at his local gas station (although this is only implied), and Edwin Neal is unquestionably the greatest madman the screen has seen since Dwight Frye's insane characters of over a quarter century ago. Other cast members are equally believable and all technical credits are above average with art director Robert Burns deserving special praise for his creative efforts.

After having seen read a number of laudatory reviews of CHAIN SAW I no longer feel as isolated in my opinion regarding the film as a better than average horror film. It is a film which, in spite of its violence and macabre, and its extreme violence, is a masterpiece. It is a masterpiece. FRANK KESTIN was in the film and PSYCHO was in the series. In order to elicit the same audience response that these films did in their respective era, direction has literally had a choice of either striking out in new directions or repeating the formula. The EXORCIST is one example of a new direction horror films may take by combining the intense physical violence of the gangster films of the twenties with the old horror film cliché of the past on an elaborate budget. CHAIN SAW easily over to the same effect may be accomplished on a minimal budget if the talent is there to support the investment. Because of its budget the film's overall effect might well be likened to the success of PGU's poorly made film of 1946, STRANGER OF THE SHAMP, which gave easily outdone by the more elaborate staged horror films of its time.

The success of THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE has unwittingly led to the preparation of another independently financed horror film announced as THREE ON A MEATBENDER. While the new film may not be exposed to explosive gun violence, it nevertheless felt that these films cannot be lumped together and wholly condemned because of their explicit violence. And while THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE may be resulting in a new one-way in a horrifying film, it is not that; basically what horror films have always striven for, from James Whale to Roman Polanski.

—Harold V. Bort

"As a special Halloween show, film buff and CHAIN SAW fan (and) Ron Rocco of Philadelphia dressed up as Leatherface, complete with apron, mask and chain saw, and at the precise moment in which the screen character took off with the chain saw, the theatergoer was startled by his own chain saw. The effect was so unnerving and unexpected that the entire portion of the audience sitting on Rocco's side of the theater instantly made tracks for the opposite side. Rocco was later congratulated by the film's director after the latter found of the film's start."

REVERBERATIONS

The master reader will find little cause from last issue's preview of **THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT** to sigh with author Jensen in his guarded optimism over the state of the fantasy genre in Great Britain. From the end it sounds very much like business as usual.

Not one of the various snippets or individuals surveyed offered the much needed reaction to the mediocrity so fundamental to these second-rate materials we know as "horror movie products"—the sewer rats of the industry.

Now we are scarcely more encouraged to read of the addition of Kevin (son of Freddie) Prince to that endless list of incoherent free-association pop primpings that our industry seems so fond of. Or maybe Jensen finds some cause to rejoice that studies men when he reports that "Kevin acknowledged that he doesn't really enjoy watching movies, although he can tolerate [critics' mine] an occasional movie of 'horror' genre. Clearly when he thinks of a... 'contracts and debt.' 'Gee, just what we needed, another bulimicizing franchiser who hates film. It's too bad Kevin couldn't refrain from telling one brand of mistaking for another, and renamed a butcher-of-animals instead of opportunities."

Perhaps Jensen will find the proper tone of indignation when, and if, he ever attempts to brook the indifference and ultimate hostility to the creative "non-related" that this type of power transfer exchange has wrought. Of course, it is the peculiar intolerance of these persons to imagine that their abhor of talent somehow entitles them to represent the "common man's" taste preferences (at infinity) informing self-perpetuating psychological (and which, incidentally, betrays their attitude of cynicism towards their own work, and social insensitivity towards their public).

What Jensen's intentions are doubtful here, but I would suggest he change his own attitude to that people like Maurice Carter, using half truths and spurious distortions, cannot persuade Jensen that maybe he shouldn't prefer Ray Harryhausen's work after all. To the end, these "serenades," the types who derive on "contracts and debt," seldom converts anything beyond obscuration and oversight. Generally, they serve because they arrived already set-up, and have mastered the appropriate protocols of sarcasm, sarcasmization, and pretension of spurious influence.

In the future, let's be farber farber piece, however tentative or qualified, of these harsh recollections and harsher people with the language sector of films.

David Alan
Dorbin, California

After reading the latest anti-Christian sentiments expressed by David MacDougall in his review of **THE EXORCIST**, not to mention the completely banished (if not blasphemous) title of the John P. Fulton article, I have decided to let my subscription to your magazine expire. The purpose of **PHOTON** should be to review horror films, not to pass judgment on and ridicule the religious convictions of its readers.

Mark Eric Fane
Alton, Iowa

As of late, I've been seeing articles by fanatics to grope with the tones, and too little understanding of said attempts on the part of readers.

Your Stuart Ganger cover issue (#21) when one person felt more baffling of a baseball magazine is one example. The idea behind the cover was an attempt to convey what was in the magazine without the standard, equally, monster-like approach.

Two counts of modern horror pieces that were poorly received include the "innocent people" cover in **EXORCIST** and the far more "disgusting" Hansen/Strong explicit images in **PHOTON**. Part of the reason the reviews reflected was the insufficient introduction. The authors capture well the lack of insight and concern many such reviewers show for the subject matter. They fail only when they state their misery by indirectly playing up certain films as "beyond criticism," with an approach leaves to an enormous parallel to that on the dashboard.

Another modern idea was Mark McGee's issue (#24) "Why Are Horror Movies So Awful?" which started off prematurely in its consideration of how and acts when

called upon to defend his "foolish" intent. He tells us: "give in, the answer is right." They're late for a taste of Devil's advocacy, but rather than derive the desired comeback, McGee leaves the void unfilled and then proceeds to knock a few hundred horror stories into the three no morality?

Don Feltman
Flushing, New York

From front to back cover, issue #25 was the most saturated and impressive in your magazine's history. **THE EXORCIST** seems to have the most space devoted to it, and rightly so. I'm one of those heretics who don't like the movie at all. Consequently, I'll never read Ron Burt to his opinion. The film does, however, manage to convey a Lamentable deed of the unknown. I am entitled to both authors for their remarks (The "compensation piece"—the Freddie interview in the last issue of **CONFESION**—looks like an instance of isolated deception, especially Freddie's claim that the levitation "was done without wires" Bill, Billy.) I consider it preposterous of MacDougall to accuse a minority-of-Western religious beliefs, but I suppose the movie lends such overkill.

The **SINBAD** piece was full of innocent enthusiasm. I wish it could alter the quality of the film. I'm far more with animation, but I think the concept only works when everything is organic to the central idea.

Dello Biondo's look at **ISLAND OF LOST SOULS** was also welcome. Kurosawa and the movie are neglected figures, owing partly to the difficulty involved in finding it to me. I hope to see more such examinations in your pages. (It should be noted in passing that the look of the movie is due in large measure to the elaborate design facilities available at Paramount in those days.)

Dan Pasko
Brooklyn, New York

Having just viewed **THE GIGANTIC VOYAGE OF SINBAD** for the second time, I must confess my disappointment, it doesn't fulfill the hopes I had imagined for a new Ray Harryhausen tale. These are embarrassing departures from logic (as in the scene in the temple of Kali where Tom Baker marches for the third part of the neutral chart, after only a few seconds of looking he lets loose a frenzied cry of "I can't find it!" and, apart from Mr. Harryhausen's fine animation, I find the technical effects lacking. The traveling matter just isn't well done. The scene in which Baker trips into the fountain just isn't convincing. I've noticed similar flaws in other Harryhausen films and think it unfortunate that the man spends so much time and effort to make his model creations survive only to be hindered by shallow present work.

Jamies Galt Sexton
Dorlington, Maryland

Allow me to make some additions and corrections to my article on the late John P. Fulton. Much of this info was reported by John's gracious widow, Bernice, and her daughter, Joanne.

John's father, Fitch, a great movie writer for RKO, got into the movies as a result of John's persuasion, not the other way around as previously stated. Fitch had been a scene painter for the theatre and John, studying under the late John H. Auer, was the need for scene painting in special effects work, convinced his father that it would be much more lucrative to apply his talents to live John had already taken charge of the effects department in Universal in 1929 and, during a hiatus was secured by Henry King for **HELL'S HARBOUR** and **EYES OF THE WORLD**. The former feature, completed in 1930, received glowing reviews mentioning Fulton's photography and gaining King's direction. Consequently King took Fulton off the production of **EYES OF THE WORLD** and replaced him with cameraman Ray June. It was a lesson to be learned for John in the politics of motion picture careers. Even by its arrival in 1931, it was a year from your director. This golden rule accounted for the success of the Fulton-Walko collaboration, as it was understood that both would equally share whatever praise was afforded their films.

For the film **SOME GOES TO WAR**, Fulton was

responsible for the training matters while Ned Mann worked on the minutemen. The proper spelling of director Irvin Willat should be noted here.

One name which has been grossly overlooked is that of Charles Brown. Charlie was directly in charge of the miniature department at Universal under Fulton, the castles, burning villages, exploding dams and motor saucers were designed by this man. Charlie came to Universal in 1930, and remained there right up through the production of **THE LAND UNKNOWN**, for which he constructed an elaborate miniature helicopter currently on display on the Universal City tour.

Two important examples of Fulton's efforts were omitted from the article were the evil attacks from **THE NAKED JUNGLE** and his work on **THE CONQUEST OF SPACE**, probably the first science fiction film to feature any extensive back-looking shot effects. As an instance of the work he did for television towards the end of his career at Paramount, Fulton created the burning title opening of **ROMANZA**.

Finally, author John Brennan mentions Fulton's flying saucer idea in the book *Movie Magic*. Brennan's Fulton's last project and was received by NTA in 1958 as **BAMBOO SAUCER**. Fulton wrote the story in association with an old friend, Ray Van Workel, and shared the efforts credit with Glenn Robinson, who constructed the miniature. Dumbo-like flying saucers, escorted with traveling matter, was very effective. Robinson built the scenes for **FORBIDDEN PLANET** and presently supervises the construction of the miniature for Universal's planned movie, the completion of **BAMBOO SAUCER** and Robinson finished the project. It was his final dream end, not with any surprise, we note it was a fantasy film.

Paul Mapelli
New York City

I'd like to compliment you on the conveniently timed publication of its kind. I especially enjoyed the article on **ISLAND OF LOST SOULS**, as I've been appalled at the lack of information to be obtained on the film, and at Charles Gairola's total disregard of the poster's merit. It became fashionable to belittle Laughton and the film with the publication of an article on horror films by Robert Bloch (inspired at an issue of *Fantasy Magazine*).

And here you refuted him in a most impressive one book line, the *Cinema* work will keep going up, paraphrased by a score of phony-critics alike! For instance, the **WHITE ZOMBIE** exit seems to have all mixed with *Cinema* and, although the film is patently absurd, shoddy, unfunny and terrible, it is ridiculed and whole ranks of fanatics get devoted to it! I really enjoy the glass shot scenes where the world is obviously a transparent printing and the coastline is back of it in a sleazy through, along with the waves breaking.

Another example of the come from Alan G. Frank's *Movie Movies*, in discussing *Manhattan's OR, JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE*. He confesses the murder of his with the forced smugness, so, as well as adding bits of names that never happens. Why? Because he is obviously unfamiliar with the film and borrowed liberally from page 64 of the *British* edition of Ivan Butler's *Movie in the Cinema*.

Finally, I'd put it to say that I wish Harryhausen would do something interesting in stop-motion. Why not a remake of King or an animated **FRANKENSTEIN**? Does the world really need another dark and grisly *Brink* book?

Douglas E. Jones
San Jose, California

I think Dello Biondo's piece on **ISLAND OF LOST SOULS** was excellent. A fine assessment of the film was demonstrated by the critic chosen to use the film with the shadow of the creature—the off-looking over the frightened humans, for example. While the layout for the piece is conceptually excellent, in execution it falls because the photos get belittled by the coarse between the pages.

Where is Ron's Frankenstein monster checklist and photography? I've a dedicated photography fan because I'm a high school student and I would like to have a complete overview of the types of films in an individual sub-genre. Filmographies are also valuable scholarly research, which is always desirable. The last two issues had none, and this one, I think, I would really like to see a Ron's filmography and checklist of monster possession than his rehashing of the already thoroughly boring topic of **THE EXORCIST**.

Frederick Chase
New York

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